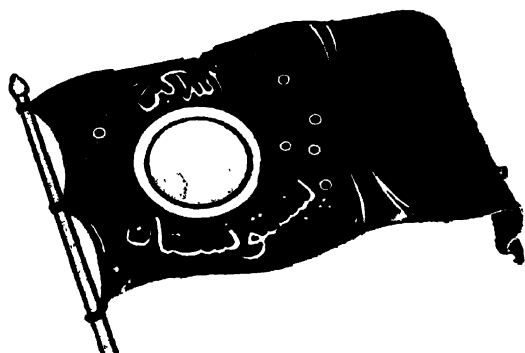


ROMANCE OF AFGHANISTAN



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M. L. R. C.

INTRODUCTION

ROMANCE OF AFGHANISTAN

The word *Romance* has a romance of its own. Romance is an undefinable term. It is to be experienced, realised, relished, in a way which is peculiarly its own. It depends on mental attitude of the individual to appreciate Romance. Romance has its theme in gallantry, chivalry, adventure, religion and similar other incidence of life, thought and activity. I leave it to my readers to appreciate "The Romance of Afghanistan" in his own way from what I have described in these few pages recording my experiences in Afghanistan, a country of many charms and yet of no charms ; for one who has eyes yet sees not, has ears, yet hears not, has heart, yet feels not, Afghanistan has no charms. Hardly any people or hardly any country in the world has more romantic association than the Afghans and Afghanistan have. Its name and names, its peoples and races, its rivers and mountains, its religions and superstitions, its poets and composers, its games and pastimes, its arts and treasures, its caves and temples—each has a romance of its own.

Romance of the name of Afghanistan :—The country is as old as one can visualise ; but its name Afghanistan is only from 1742 A. D. Before 1742 A. D. it was a country of many names. In the Avesta it is *Bakudhi* (modern Balkh) ; in Sanskrit *Balhika* ; in Greek Bactria. Kabul was *Vac kereta*. To the Iranians, it is *Khorasan*—land of the Sun ; to the Epic Indians, it was *Gandhrra* ; to the tribals,

it was *Pushtun* (land of mountains) or *Pakhtune* from which *Pathans* have come ; it was also known as *Sulaiman*. Al Biruni in his *Kitab-ul-Hind* (Book of India) mentioned the word *Afghan*, a legendary figure, connected with Jewish extraction, but it was not any Land.

There were different zones known under different names such as Sistan, Herat, Ghazni, Ghor, Qandahar. Mountainous regions were known by the names of mountains, such as *Koh-i-Baba* (mount of Old Saint Baba), *Sia Koh* (Black Mountain), *Safid-Koh* (White Mountain), (*Koh*—mountain). The name Afghanistan was familiarised from the time of the Anglo-Russian controversy in the extending their spheres of influence in the 19th and 20th centuries in this part of the world.

To-day the Afghans call their land—The *Ariana*, the land, of the Aryans, which according to them, was the original home of the ancient Aryans. According to them, the Aryans, migrated from here.

Is not the name Afghanistan enough romantic ?

The *racial origin* of the children of Afghanistan has many stories to tell—who were they ? Afgans are not one race but a combination of many. The modern Afghans consist of many tribes—the Ghilzai in the east, the Yusufzai and Afridi in the Indian border, the Durani in the west, and the Tajiks, Hazarah, Uzbek in the north-west. In the west, they are from the Iranian stock. They have Aryan, Semitic, Mongol, Hun and Turki blood mixed—so the anthropologists say.

In fact, the modern Afghans feel a unity more in their mental background than is justified by their blood. However, in a modern state, the feeling and sense of unity and a belief in common destiny, are greater force than an analysis of blood.

The *Ariana* people believe that their river Helmond is the river of heaven like the *Anahit* of Iran, or the *Mandakini* of the Hindus. Their mountains guard their frontiers and they attribute divinity to their natural guardians like *Koh-i-Baba*.

The romance of *religion* of Afghanistan is no less interesting. The discovery of burial statues in Kafiristan has conclusively proved the existence of Hindu customs and manners in that region. Gandhari's association with the modern Qandahar, which, in the days of its glory, included Kabul and even beyond, proves that the ancient Indian religion and rites had their play in the region. Zoroaster, the Prophet of the Fire Cult, was born in Balkh and tradition says that He was also slain in the land of His birth when the Turanians stormed Balkh. Zoroastrianism prevailed during the Parthian and Sassanian periods of Afghan history. The Afghans claim that their Prophet Zoroaster taught the Iranians their cult of fire worship. It was the Divine favour of Fire which inspired the Achaemenian kings and gave them their glory. Darius and Cyrus sent annual presents to the memory of Zoroaster. Alexander occupied a large tract of modern Afghanistan and established several Alexandrias in that region. The Greek culture and some traces of Greek religion could be

found in the Greeko-Bactrian art of Afghanistan. Megasthenes, a Greek officer at Qandahar, was sent to the court of Chandragupta in India. In fact, Megasthenes was a *domiciled* Afghan.

Buddhism was spread in Qandahar area by Asoka and it is proved by the recent discovery of an inscription of Asoka written in Greek, Aramaic and Brahmi alphabets.

The sacred water pot of Buddha was said to have been carried to Qandahar which had been seen by Bellow in an ancient site in Qandahar. Prof Tucci of Italy has published fascimile of the inscription in French and Italian.

Kanishka, the founder of the *Mahayana* form of Buddhism, the second Asoka, was practically, a *domiciled* Afghan with his capital at Hudda in western Jalalabad. His another capital was at Bamian in the north-western front of Afghanistan near the border of Russian Turkistan. The tallest statue of Buddha in the world (171 feet high) lies in Afghanistan on the walls of a mountain at Bamian.

The Greek colonists and settlers in Bactria accepted Buddhism, or Zoroastrianism and they mixed up the Greek religious rites and practices with those of Buddhism.

Till the advent of the Arabs in the early 8th century, the religion of the inhabitants of this area was some loose form of fire worship, of animism and of Buddhism. The Hindus also dominated there through the *Shahia* family who claimed to be descendants of the later Kushanas.

Since the coming of the Arabs, the whole of this area bounded by mountains on four sides definitely became

Islamised. The Islam of Afghanistan never tolerates any other form of religion except the *Hanafi* form of Islam. A *Shia* or a *Bahai* (a religious order founded by Bahauallah of Iran) is not tolerated in Afganistan. The official religion of the Afghans is Hanafi Islam. There are some Jews here and there, even the Hindus are preferred to a Shia or a Bahai in Afghanistan. No one is permitted to change his Islamic religion in Afghanistan. No Christian missionary is allowed to start a school where the Afghan children would be admitted. Private worship is allowed but not public worship by non-Muslims.

The Afghans claim that Persian language and Persian poetry developed in the court of Ghazni. The court language of Ghazni was Persian though Arabic was the language of their religion. The great Persian poets like Sadi, Hafiz, Rumi, Ansari, Utbi, Baihaki and many others had intimate association with the Ghazni court, or Afghan patronage. The Iranians refuse to recognise their debt to Ariana. The Afghans use Arabic as their language of liturgy; Poshtu as their national language, Persian as their language of culture. They are trying to avoid Persian as far as possible to day.

The great *Buz-koshi* game, the goat-killing game, is the national game of the Afghans. It is a game with many thrill, horsemanship, dangers and risks. It is a romance for even the Gods to enjoy. The horsemanship and the marksmanship of the Afghan hunters have filled many pages of Afghan national romance. Every one of the Afghan national games testifies to their genius for heroism,

endurance and adventure. Their day-to-day pastimes have no equal in any part of the world in heroism.

The arts and treasures that have been discovered in the caves and temples throughout Afghanistan have been deposited in the Kabul Museum which is growing. When it will grow up, the Kabul Museum will be one of the richest after the Museums of Cairo, Jerusalem and Beirut in the East. The Gandhara art where the Indian, Greek and Afghan arts have been fused into one, will testify to the genius of the local artisans for ages.

Few travellers and visitors in modern age undertake the trouble of visiting this country of mountains and forests with hardly any open and safe roads or any navigable river. The mountain passes with heavy and uncertain snow-falls and the impassable deserts infested with adventurers and robbers, were a dread to the common man. In modern times, the country offers few attractions to luxury-travellers. Her women are in veils, wine is sold here behind the veil, and her mountains are often veiled under perpetual snows. Her rivers are turbulent in summer when the snow melts, and dry in winter when the snow freezes. Is not that romantic ?

My journey to Afghanistan has a romance of its own. I was booked by the Ariana Airways of Afghanistan for the 3rd of March, but on the eve of my taking the flight from the Delhi Air port, I was told that the Kabul Airport was under six feet deep snow ; none could predict when the snow would be cleared. So, I had to take to Air France to go to Teheran direct. I was detained for seven days to get a seat in the Air France. In the meantime, the Incometax

Clearance expired on the 10th. So I had to take a fresh certificate for the 11th. March from the lady officer.

It was arranged by my young friend Prof. Wilson of Cambridge who worked with me at Teheran, with a young English officer, that we three should come to Kabul by car straight through Khorasan, Herat and Ghazni. I was thrilled with the prospect of a romantic journey through plains, deserts, mountains and forests visiting the historic cities of Meshad, Ghor and Ghazni. But Prof. Wilson was attracted by the prospect of a more enchanting romance with his *fiance* at Copenhagen where they would be married within a month. So he could not wait to take a long route to Kabul, go then to Moscow by Air and finally to Copenhagen via Paris by a car. He had no time. He decided to start for Paris by Air. He left a only note to my waiter in *Bashgah* telling me that he would fly alone. I did not personally know the English officer with whom we were to come by car. So, I missed a romantic journey over-land from Iran to Afghanistan for want of an introduction. Anyway, the misfortune of me is mine.

But, on the Ariana airship from Teheran to Kabul, I had a short romance with a young German boy, Irlinger, who had not had his first shave. Our acquaintance was through a lost scarp which had fallen from his neck in the Air office and which I picked up and returned to him in the airship. We talked and talked all about the post-war Germany and its romantic revival. I fell terribly air-sick at Qandahar and it was this German boy who nursed me and gave me all help till I reached the airport at Kabul.

On the way, he told me a romantic tale of his mother whom he was going to meet at Kabul. In the morning, Mrs. Irlinger is a teacher in a German school for German children in Kabul. In the noon, she is an office-secretary in the Ariana Air office at Kabul ; at night she is an accountant in a German Club at Kabul. She is three in one. Her husband, a former prisoner of war, at the hands of the Russians, released from the concentration camp, is now in Argentina enjoying a romance with an American girl without divorcing his German wife. Mrs. Irlinger pays for the education of her sons, one at Bremen and another at Berlin. The younger Irlinger was my fellow passenger in the Ariana. The boy frankly told me about the romance of his father whom he does not remember ; while talking about his mother tears rolled down his cheeks in affection and reverence, for she works eighteen hours a day to meet the expenses of education of her two sons in Germany. This German boy and German mother in Kabul were my assets in Afghanistan. She became a *sister* to me.

After I reached Kabul, within one hour, I was invited by the Third Secretary of our Embassy to have drinks with him, where an English friend who had just arrived at Kabul, had also been invited. I begged to be excused because I did not take liquor, yet I agreed to be present to make acquaintance with the British officer of the British Embassy.

Exactly at 9 O' clock, our Embassy car came to my hotel. I met at the gate our Third Secretary and an English gentleman waiting for me. Both of them introduced themselves

to me—"I" Mr. Premsankar of the Indian, "I, Mr. from Binny the British embassy," I looked at Mr. Binny and Mr. Binny looked at me. Suddenly, he claimed. "Are you not the Indian Professor who is from Teheran? and are you not a friend of Mr. Wilson?" He did not wait for answer. We shook hands. He was exactly the man with whom I was to come by a car through Khorasan, Meshad, Ghor and Ghazni. It was a romantic meeting of two friends who knew each other but had never seen each other. He talked the romance of his journey from Ishpahan to Kabul.

At night, I was assigned a room in an old portion of the Kabul Hotel where the foreign travellers are generally accommodated in order to give them the association of medieval Afghan aristocracy. I was given a couch as high as five feet standing on six legs, carved out of the bones of hunted animals; on the table there were dishes and cups with painted *sakis* with wine cups in their hands though wine was prohibited in Islam; a medieval type of fire place showed half-burnt charcoals and not electricity or gas. On the walls were painted war scenes of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni riding on a horse with drawn-out sword. Our room was overlooking the Daria-i-Kabul in the back, and beyond were the vast fields stretching towards Hindustan. At night, I had a romantic dream. I dreamt as if I was amongst the retinue of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni riding on horseback, driving towards Hindustan. Scenes of war flashed on my inward eye in my dream, killing of soldiers, burning of camps, plundering of temples, breaking of idols, groans of the dying and shrieks of the fleeing. What horrible dream!

Next morning, I changed my room to the newly built portion of Kabul Hotel lest the horror of the dream be repeated.

Next day, Prof. Hussain Shah and Prof. Mahammad Ali, both of History Department, came to me on behalf of the University. Mir Husain Shah was born at Qandahar, educated at Lucknow and was now a Professor at the Kabul University. Mahammad Ali was born at Kabul, married in Kashmir. He served in Delhi and now he is the head of the Department of History in the University of Kabul. They felt a romantic kinship with me because they found in me a part of India. Professor Mahammad Ali gave his romantic experience of Indian life and association during the days of the Partition,—before and after. Both rendered me ungrudging service in my quest of the Legacy of Afghanistan. My thanks to them.

My next acquaintance was Mr. Kohzad, the doyen of modern *Ariana* culture. He was an Afghan by birth and an *Ariana* by conviction. He was the founder of the Ariana movement. His main mission was to discover the lost heritage of his motherland and to revive it. Mr. Kohzad had discovered his lost heritage in India where the Afghans or the children of the *Ariana* had given their best to the Indian culture. He dreams of a cultural unity of India and Ariana. Ours was a romantic meeting in the small meeting room of the the Ariana Club over-looking the Daria-i- Kabul. The walls of the room were romantically painted with Indian scenes from the time of the migration of the Vedic Aryans till the time of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. He found me a symbol—a living link—between his

Ariana and our *Aryasthan*. Mr. Kohzad is a man of vision. No Indian could come out from his room without feeling a kinship with this romantic child of Afghanistan.

My meeting with the Vice Chancellor of the Kabul University called the *Pahantun*: His Excellency Ali Asgar Khan, the Vice Chancellor, is a leader of the national movement of Afghanistan. He is burning with the idea of Pakhtunistan. He is proud of being a *Pakhtun*. He feels what he talks and talks what he feels. To him, Iran has done more harm to Afghanistan's life and culture than even the Arabs or Turks. His mission is to modernise Afghanistan in every sense of the term and that will be done by education. He arranged for my stay, travel and lectures in Afghanistan.

Mr. Bohzal, the Information officer of the Kabul Government, gave me information about many romantic sites of Afghanistan—the tomb of Babur, the Garden of Babur, the sites of the Afghan wars, other monuments around Kabul, the tomb of Nadir Khan, the Museum of Kabul and all that speak of the glory of Afghanistan from Alexander to King Amanullah—a period of 2350 years. His was the romantic description of Afghan heroes in times of war, and of Afghan arts, architectures, in times of peace and incidentally, all that are connotated by the word 'Afghan.' This young man Bohzal was an Afghan by birth, an Iranian by marriage, an American by education and a believer in the future of Greater Afghanistan inspite of the Baghdad Pact. He described me to the "shape of Afghanistan to come".

Mr. Moktaderi, the Councillor of Iran in Afghanistan, who was an acquaintance of mine at Delhi, accompanied me to Ghazni, the city of many romances of Medieval Asia. Though an Iranian with a sense of superiority of his own culture, he had his great respect for India. He always gave me a romantic description of the four years of his life that he spent in India as the Cultural Attache to the Iranian Embassy. He introduced me to many of the foreign personalities in Afghanistan with whom I would have no chance to meet otherwise.

My visit to Ghazni was as romantic as I could expect it be. The great fort of Sultan Muhmud of Ghazni, the high towers of victory, the tomb of Sultan Mahmud and that of Sabuktigin brought to my vision the good old days of the achievements of the Turks and Afghans in India. I heard that Sultan Muhmud had brought from India so many prisoners and slaves and sold them in open market that 'even a beggar in Ghazni had an Indian slave to beg for him'. So runs the proverb :

The silver bars which he had plundered from India were utilised in his building for constructing tubes and water tunnels round the fort, and his booty in gold was used to construct the water taps and furniture. The royal reception that was given to me by the Governor of Ghazni and the Darbar, which was held in my honour, was a romantic experience for me.

The last of my romantic experience in Fābul was my acquaintance with Mr. Gulji, the young painter from Pakistan, engaged in drawing portraits of his Majesty, the

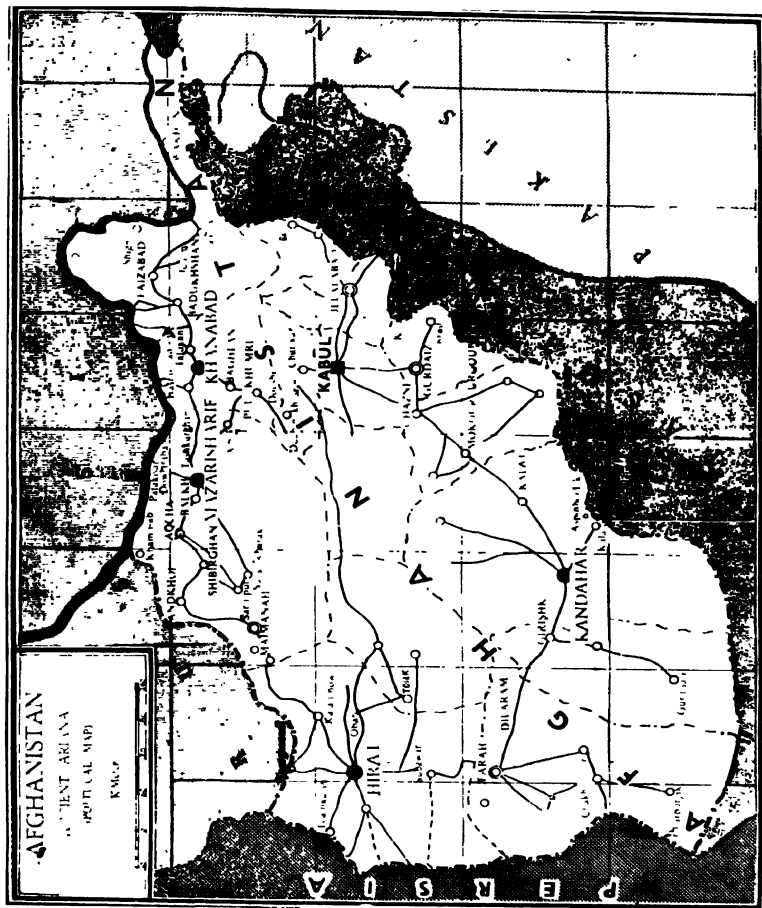
King of Afghanistan in Kabul. This young Gulji was an Indian by birth, a Pakhtun by blood, a Pakistani by nationality, an engineer by training and a painter by choice.

He had wide experience of travel in Canada, France, Holland, Scandinavia and Great Britain. I was invited to witness his paintings in the exhibition organised by the U. S. A. Embassy to strengthen the cultural ties between U. S.A. and Pakistan. But the secret disclosures in connection with that exhibition made by Gulji was a revelation to me. His themes were romantic, his paintings were romantic too. His descriptions were charming, his vision was fascinating. My acquaintance with him in Kabul was a great achievement of mine, It was a romance upon a romance.

Next I went to visit the Khyber Pass with the First Secretary of our Embassy, Mr. Ohri. The journey was thrilling through the mountain passes and along the Kabul river. I was following the same route as Alexander the Great had followed towards India. On the way, I met a few Indians who had been living there since the time of Jaipal who had fought Sabuktigin at the Lagman area. The remnants of all that remained of the Hindu culture, carried me to the heroic days of India, a thousand years back. The thrilling experience of our journey and the narrow escape which I had from the hands of the robbers, reminded me of my tragic experience in the Desert of Sahara in Egypt fifteen years back in Africa. My journey and my experience in Afghanistan may very well fill up the pages of a Romance.

Calcutta University

M L. Roy Choudhury



Romance of Afghanistan

At 5 A. M. on 1st June 1959, the Ariana Air Transport arrived at the door of the University Club of Teheran to pick me up to the airport of Mehrabad. Mr. Chopra had prepared tea for me and I had some sandwiches with me bought last night. By that time I had finished my bath and shave and had my tea with Mr. Chopra. My luggage had already been sent to the main gate of the *Bushgah* (University Club) so that transport of the Ariana might not be missed. The Sikh gentleman who was in charge of the Ariana Booking at the Mehrabad Airport was very happy to assure me that the extra charges of any luggage would be adjusted at the Airport. He was not certain about the customs though I was sure that as I was a guest of the University of Kabul, there would be no difficulty with the Customs officials as I had none before.

Exactly at 5-30 A. M. our transport arrived at the Airport where still then there were no passen-

gers, nor had the officers of other Air Lines arrived. By the side of the Ariana Booking Closet to the west there was the Air France and by the east there was the B. O. A. C. Sandwiched between the two big offices, the Ariana Booking Closet looked like an apology. But the big figure of the Sikh gentleman who represented the Ariana Airlines more than compensated the gorgeous show to the left and right. The Sikh gentleman had a young assistant who was also a Sikh boy, still within his teens but without beard ; only his tuft of hairs with a big turban indicated that he was a Sikh. His appearance was almost like that of an Afghan Had he not his tuft of hairs and the big turban over his head, nobody would mistake him for an Indian. The boy was smiling all along and was very anxious to render me any service that was possible for him to do. He offered me a chair and a cup of tea and he told me that he was very sorry to have left his mother at home. His father had been killed in the riot of 1946, while he was a boy of three years, and he gave me a very sorrowful story of the atrocities committed on the members of his family. I shared his sentiments because I had lost in the riot my entire family including my three brothers, six nephews, four uncles, eight cousins and all my properties

'had been burnt to ashes. Since the riot of 1946, I had not been able to visit my ancestral home, or our family temples, nor worship our family deities. I narrated before the young man the tragedy of my family and he burst into tears which a Sikh generally does not do.

By that time the Customs officials arrived ; the young boy himself took charge of my luggages and got all my papers ready by his pesonal intervention. I found that the boy was liked by everybody in the Air Office because of his ever-smiling face and courteous behaviour. He told me that there were only four passangers in the Ariana Afghan ship including myself. One was a gentleman coming from Beirut. He was an Afghan and had been to Egypt on a commercial mission ; he was unusually reticent. I felt that he 'was possibly connected with secret diplomatic service, if not he was actually a spy. Suddenly a tall young man aged about seventeen years, rushed into our Closet. His hairs were of gold, his eyes were dark blue and his face was beaming with life. He had on his back two packages and nothing more except a sash wrapped round his neck which indicated that he was coming from a cold country. By that time the departure of the ship was announced by a bell and I had to take

leave of that Sikh boy who was a friend of ten minutes and object of remembrance for all life to come. He offered me a *Pranam* (salutation) and asked me to meet him if I again come back to Kabul. I am very sorry that I had not asked him his name. I now want to write to him, but I have no opportunity to address him for want of his name and address. This indeed is a tragedy, for, I know how much I liked the boy because of the common misery and sorrow which both of us suffered as a consequence of the riot of 1946-47.

While I was going out of the barrier of Customs and Police, I found an Afghan bearer waiting for my luggage to be carried to the plane, but he did not ask for tips, though I felt that he expected to have some. This is the difference between an Afghan and an Iranian. An Iranian would always expect some *Bakshis* for any kind of service he might render to a man. Even a postman would not deliver a telegram in time if he did not get the *Bakshis* for delivery of the telegram. Sometimes he would tear it off. During the *Nawruz* festival (New Year's Festival) at Teheran I had the experience of not getting my letters delivered to my address because ours was a Teachers' residence where *Bakshis* would not be expected to be enough for satisfying the

insatiable greed of an Iranian postman. Even in a grocer's shop in Teheran a shop-boy would expect *Bakshis* after he had packed and delivered the goods to the customer, otherwise he would feel that his customer was not a decent man.

The young boy who was evidently from Europe in the flush of his youth, running towards Ariana ship, had let his sash fall down, but he did not perceive it. I picked it up and called him aloud but he did not respond to my call because he did not expect to be called. However, I carried his sash and inside the plane I gave it to him. He was astonished and immediately he spoke to me in broken English and in broken Persian. He thanked me for picking up the sash and giving it to him. From his accent I could understand that English was not his language. He took his seat just by my side and I felt that I had a friend on the way and I could talk and gather information.

The boy started talking and like a French man he gave his own introduction that he was going to Kabul to meet his mother, who was an officer in the Ariana Air Lines. I was astonished to hear that she was a German lady staying at Kabul and working in the Afghan Air Lines for the last five years. The more we talked, the more our

conversation became interesting. He told me that his mother was in Kabul for five years, his father in Argentina. He was himself a student in an automobile engineering school in West Berlin and his brother was a naval apprentice at Bremen. He at once invited me to the house of his mother at Kabul. He said that he had already visited India with his mother ; he had been to Peshwar, Allahabad, Delhi, Agra and Benares. He was almost feeling a sort of religious joy when he was speaking of the Hindu devotees taking their bath bare-headed, bare-bodied and bare-footed in cold winter. He himself was a Christian, a pious Catholic Christian and he had visited Jerusalem and offered prayers at the Holy Sepulchre. He developed a liking for me because I had also visited Jerusalem and offered my prayers in the Hall of Confession which was reserved only for the Catholics.

The Airship which was a very small one, the roof almost touching the head of a tall passenger and the entire floor of the ship was littered with a large number of packages which were to be carried to Qandahar Airport. It was practically a freight ship. We were only four passengers. A young boy who was the Air host

gave us some chocolates and lozenges and also prepared breakfast with the seal of P. A. A. (Pan American Airways). I asked him how in the Ariana Airship he could give us P. A. A. packets of breakfast. He smiled and said that the Ariana Afghan Air Lines was controlled by the P. A. A. and it was affiliated to P. A. A. as one of its official Eastern Wings. Further, he said that in this very ship there were two officers, one was a Pilot and the other a Wireless Operator who were Indians. He was the only Afghan who was employed in this ship, but his appointment, too, was an unimportant one. However, he said that he was a student in the University of Qandahar. He had always two flights a week from Teheran to Qandahar, then Qandahar to Kabul and some times to Amritsar in India. Other five days he worked in the University. The money which he earned in two days was sufficient to cover his expenses for five days a week. He was delighted to know that I was going to address the Kabul University and he very much wished to be present in one of my lectures if he would know the time and place in advance. The young German boy, whose name was Irlinder Roger, exchanged his breakfast with mine. I invited the Afghan Air host to share our breakfast. We

three together had our breakfast and we discussed many topics about Afghanistan, India and Germany.

By the time we reached Qandahar—it was about 10 O'clock ; the sun was terrible though the sky was gloomy. Moreover the Airship was packed to suffocation with goods. I had to take off my overcoat, my socks and also my warm sweater. Coming from a very cold region of Iran, this heat of Qandahar was a cruel punishment for me—so was it for Mr. Roger.

At 10.30 A. M. we got down for lunch. Mr. Roger and I went to the Qandahar Airport Hotel, but they told us that our lunch had been fixed up in the City Hotel. There on our way to the hotel we met an Indian pilot. Mr. Singh from Allahabad and we both talked a little Hindi which delighted Mr. Roger. We followed the pilot and went into car—it was not a car really, but a Carrier of Arms used in the last war. In the front, it was practically open and at the back it was all open. As the a car proceeded towards the city which was ten miles away from the Airport, the hot blasts of wind and storms of dust practically enveloped the car. As the speed of the car increased, the hot blasts of wind became more terrific and biting. There was no touch of snow, nor water, nor a flower, nor a tree bearing any fruit

or foliage as Babur would have it. It was the month of June.

I had a fascination for Qandahar. It was really the bone of contention between the Mughals of India and the Safawids of Persia. Qandahar was the country wherefrom Babur had proceeded towards India before the Battle of Panipat and this was the city, the resort of Humayun when he fled from India being hotly pursued by Sher Shah. Later on, Baitam Khan held Qandahar as a protege of Humayun who was then ruling over this *Vilayet* (province) of Kabul. In fact, the history of Qandahar is extremely interesting from the Indian point of view. I also heard from Prof. S. K. Dutt of Delhi that near the city of Qandahar there was a bilingual inscription of Asoka in Greek and Arabic languages. Previously Prof. J. N. Banerjee of Calcutta University advised me to visit that very significant region of Qandahar where this inscription had been discovered by the Italian savant Tucci. This Qandahar was also the city of Gandhar which was the fatherland of *Gandhari* of the Mahabharat. This, of course, is only a tradition, for which there is no definite proof except the similarity of the two words Gandhar and Qandahar. Greek traditions claim that it was the city of Alexander which

was contracted into Qandahar by the residents of the locality in later times. However, Qandahar from my standpoint was extremely interesting.

I had also communicated from Teheran with our Consul in Qandahar to make arrangements for my visit to Herat. In fact, I made all arrangements to stay at Qandahar for at least three days so that I might visit the ancient region of Herat which had very close connections with India. We have been told that what is known as Herat now was a part of the ancient Sivastan (modern Seistan) where the ancient Aryans composed a part of the Rig Veda. But the climate of Qandahar was so terrible for me that I had not the courage to stop there for three long days. I would be satisfied, I told the Air host, if he could arrange to take me to Shar-i-Kohn, ten miles from the city where the inscription of Asoka had been discovered. I would be extremely grateful to him, if he could do that for me. He said that he would, after we had finished our lunch.

By about 1.30 P. M. Mr. Roger and myself had our lunch finished, but the Air host who was with us would not take lunch with us because it was not permitted by the Ariana Afghan Lines that its Air host would be a guest of a passenger. He took only

a few apples with us—of course the number was nine. He was a voracious eater as I had found out in the ship while we took our breakfast together. Mr. Roger did not take any liquid, but he consumed three bottles of aerated water. The Afghan food that was served to us contained *Palau* with vegetables and no meat which was the general food in Iran. There was no *Kabab* but a plate of meat separately which was filled up with soup. The piece of meat was as big as the saucer of a tea-cup. Possibly it was not meant for a man of my type, but for an Afghan; even for German Roger it was too big. There were six pieces for each of us and I could not consume even a portion of one of the pieces. I finished a plate of black grapes and two crimson apples, one big pear and one bottle of ginger. But the Indian Pilot who was taking his lunch in another table which was meant for only the Pilots and Wireless Operators and other officers of the Ariana Lines, took half an hour to finish his lunch. While I was waiting for him to take me to Shar-i-Kohn he could read my impatience from my demeanour and he smiled, but he assured me that he would take me to Shar-i-Kohn. At 2 O'clock we started for Shar-i-Kohn which was just on the way back to the Airport. I was completely disappointed

when I saw that the inscription had already been removed from its site and only an open space at the foot of a small hillock on the crossway signified that some sort of inscription was there. But my disappointment was more than compensated when our car turned towards tomb of Ahmed Shah near the famous sanctuary of Khirka Sharif which was built on the 'noble robe' supposed to have been worn by the Holy Prophet of Islam.

We came back to the Airport at about 2.30 p.m. and found a large number of materials collected around the port. On being questioned, our Indian Pilot told me that the Americans were planning to rebuild the whole Airport of Qandahar on a new model. After it would be completed the Qandahar Airport would turn out to be the main centre of distribution of Airships and flights all over the East. It will shorten the air-flights to England and to U.S.A. by at least three to five hours. Pakistan is not very happy over this scheme of America because it will lessen the importance of Karachi as an Airport and distributing centre of the East, a position which Karachi has been occupying for last few years. But America requires to rebuild and reconstruct the Airport of Qandahar because it will serve them as a take-off point in times of strategic needs. The

Airport on the north of Kashmir in the Pakistan occupied area is not very suitable for a big Air base because of the perpetual snow and uncomfortable surroundings. The plan about Qandahar Airport is now to extend the area on three sides except to the city side by six miles involving an expenditure of \$ 30,000,000. This is in fact a challenge to the penetration by the Russians who are constructing land routes from six different centres on the northern border of Afghanistan connecting Balkh, Bukhara, Samarqand and Kabul. From Kabul the Russians have built a road along the Kabul River which goes up to Jalalabad and then to Torkhum wherefrom Peshwar is only forty miles. Modern Afghans are clever enough to see through the game of America vis-a-vis Russia, and the Afghans are exploiting both the Americans and Russians. They fully utilise the *Point Four Program* and are accepting whatever is given to them by the Americans, though sometime it is a Loan ; but this Loan will never be paid back, a fact which both the Americans and Afghans know quite well.

The young Afghan boy who was with us as Air host was careful enough not to make any comments on what Mr. Singh had told me, but he was rather uncomfortable. Mr. Roger, the German boy, told

me something about the West and East Berlin conflicts due to the pressure of the Americans on one side and the Russians on the other. On the whole he said that the Germans theoretically liked the Russians but from the objective point of view, the Americans are liked more because they give them opportunities of comfortable living, higher wages, good houses and other similar amenities of life. The German mothers who had been suffering from want of food and fuel yesterday, are very happy today because things come to their doors simply for the asking. But the farsighted Germans are not happy over this, because easy supply will take away their national initiative for work and the virility of their character-factors which distinguish them from other vanquished peoples of the last war.

Our Plane took off at 2. 45 P.M. towards Kabul and now it was packed to suffocation because a large number of labourers had entered the Plane. I am afraid none of them had his ticket because their dresses were shabby, hands were practically plastered with cement and sand, on their shoulders were hatchets and many of them were barefooted. Certainly they must be labourers connected with the U. S. A. Airways or some contractors connected with the Afghan Government.

I felt suffocation and the Plane was flying low. Immediately I felt giddiness and started vomitting. I could not even go to the bathroom and had to use the paper packets given to passengers for use as packets for vomitting. Mr. Roger realised my condition and he at once took hold of me and gave me a little water from his flask. I felt a little better and Mr. Roger would not let me lean and he placed my head on his shoulder and just like a friend he caressed my hairs and put into my mouth a little hot coffee which he procured from the Air host. By 4.30 P.M. our Plane reached Kabul Airport. Mr. Roger took my two luggages and one Ispahani blanket which I was taking to India as memento of the famous wool industry of Iran.

Mr. Roger got down the Plane in front of me and we had to cross about a quarter of a mile to reach the Customs Office where I found an Indian, very carefully dressed and very forward in his approach. He came to me at once and asked me if I were Dr. Roy Chowdhury from Teheran. On my nodding assent he shook hands with me and told that he had been sent by the Ambassador of India in Kabul to take me to the Hotel arranged for me by the University of Kabul. Just then came in another very tall,

healthy young man well-shaved, European dressed with Astrakhan cap on his head and he was introduced to me by that Indian gentleman as Prof. Mir Hussain Shah of the University of Kabul. Mir Hussain Shah introduced himself as a Professor in the University of Kabul in the Department of History. He had been sent by the Vice-Chancellor with his car to take me to Hotel Kabul on the bank of the *Dariya-i-Kabul*. The Indian gentleman whose name I learnt later as Mr. Chhadani was insisting that I should go in his car because he had come first. Prof. Mir Hussain Shah was insisting that I should go in his car because I was a guest of his University. He was really very keen and would have felt insulted if I had not gone in his car because I knew that Afghans are very touchy and even sentimental in these small matters. So I said that I would go by the car of the Vice-Chancellor, but my luggages would be sent by the car of the Ambassador and we three should go in the same car. My luggages were not even opened by the Customs Officers the moment I was introduced as a guest of the *Pahantun-e-Kabul* (University of Kabul). I saw Mr. Roger looking vacant because the Customs Officers were interrogating him too much and too suspiciously ; but I was helpless and I could not help him in any way except by

telling him to meet me at Hotel Kabul at the earliest opportunity. We shook hands and left.

Within 15 minutes we reached the Hotel Kabul and got into my room No. 2 which was in the old portion of the Hotel. It was a big room with old type of heating arrangements with wood, —no coal, or electricity. The bath room was of old Afghan type with big mirrors hanging on walls; there were small brackets and shelves, and porcelain jars and bathing mugs. A towel was placed on a table and also a soap case which was fit for a curio shop and not for a modern traveller. The bed was also of wood with ornamented legs unusually high and there were mosquito curtain poles though the room was absolutely free from mosquito. There was a big almirah which might be used as a wardrobe, but it was not modern any way. Mr. Chhadani told me that this room was possibly chosen to give me the atmosphere of old Afghan type of aristocracy. The hotel manager told me that the foreign travellers generally prefer to stay in the old portion of the hotel facing the River Kabul to give them an atmosphere of ancient Kabul. Prof. Mir Hussain Shah suggested that I should better move to the newly built block of the building facing the Cinema Hall and the *Chahr-rah*, the

Mall of Kabul because that would be more comfortable. The new block was air-conditioned, with good electric fittings and furnished with Dunlop cushions and pillows. I wanted to spend the night in the old portion of the building and if required I would change over the next morning.

I took my bath in hot water, had my tea with some biscuits and fruits. Fruit is the usual part of all meals—morning, evening and night. By 7 P. M. I was ready and much of my air-sickness was gone. I had travelled by air so many times before, but this was the first time that I had air-sickness. It was possibly no air-sickness at Qandahar but suffocation caused by the large number of Afghan passengers in that small Ariana Plane.

Unexpectedly, I got a telephone from Mr. Chhadani inviting me to the house of Mr. Prem Sankar, our cultural secretary. He invited me through Mr. Chhadani to have a drink with him. He further told me that a young British scholar had just come to join the British Embassy in Kabul. He would also be present there and he would be delighted to talk to me, because I was a professor of history and he was a student of history. I told him that I would go to Mr. Prem Sankar's house to have talk with him but not

for drink. After my fatigue I would love to have some cold drinks.

At 7-30 P. M. Mr. Chhadani came with a car to take me to Mr. Sankar's house. There I found a young Englishman, Mr. Binny, aged 24, very bright in appearance, with penetrating eyes, aquiline nose and curly golden hair. He seems to be un-English in appearance, almost like a Greek. He said that he had arrived only two days back from Teheran by car *via* Khorasan and Herat. I asked him if he knew Mr. Wilson who was a visiting Professor in the University of Teheran. He at once told me that Mr. Wilson and he were to come to Kabul by car and an Indian Professor who was also in the University of Teheran was to come by that car. I at once stretched my hand and shook hands with him and said that I was to have accompanied him in the same car. He told me that Mr. Wilson could not wait because he was to be married in Copenhagen and the date was fixed. So, if Mr. Wilson took the overland journey *via* Kabul and then by plane to Moscow and Bremen and finally by Air to Paris, it would be too long a journey. So he changed his route and went straight to Paris where he would purchase a car and then drive straight to Copenhagen. So being unacquainted

with me Mr. Binny came alone by car and it was accidental that I came by plane from Teheran to Kabul and met him at the house of Mr. Prem Sankar. He regretted that we had not met at Teheran and in that case our journey would have been delightful ; instead, he came all the way alone. I also came alone though we knew each other through a common friend who was not present before us at Kabul.

It seemed that Mr. Binny knew much about my proposed book, *Discovery of Iran*. I was astonished how he knew it. He told me that he had heard from Dr. Arberry of Cambridge that one Professor Chowdhury from India had delivered a lecture in the University of Siraj on *Ancient India and Ancient Iran* on the same day when Dr. Arberry had delivered his lecture in the same University on *Omar Khayyam by Fitzgerald*. I also had given Dr. Arberry a copy of my lecture on *Sufism in Indian environment*. Mr. Binny also told me that Professor Allan Grant of the University of Teheran, formerly of Cambridge, had told him that I was planning to write a book on Iran in which I had invited him to contribute an article on *Iran in the eyes of an Englishman*. But Mr. Grant said that it would not be possible for him to give his honest impressions on the University of

Teheran and the elite of Teheran, because these people are a peculiar type—'very conscious of their own possessions without deserving the position'. Anyway, Mr. Binny had proved that he was a real Cambridge man by his highbrow observations on the people of the East.

Mr. Binny drank like a fish and Mr. Prem Sankar followed him, but one could not outdo the other ; both of them were of the same age, both were bright students, both were interested in history. As I was a Professor of History, both of them became interested in me. Mr. Prem Sankar gave me a couple of books on Afghanistan and gave me some of his impressions on the Afghans which I remember, but I would not record them to-night because it would be premature to verify them. I must make my own study.

Mr. Binny gave me a thrilling description of the adventurous journey which he undertook from Teheran to Kabul through Kirman, Mashed, the desert of Herat, the mountains of Ghazni. He presented to me also some pictures immediately and I told him that I should visit some of these regions before I leave Afghanistan. At about 10 P. M. I returned to my hotel. I wanted to put down my observations in my diary but I was rather tired.

So I just jotted down some points and went to sleep.

June 2.

Doctor J. P. Sinha of Manchester University came to me with Mr. Chhadani of our Embassy at 7 A. M. This young man, Dr. J. P. Sinha, was working on the *Tribes of Afghanistan*. Though a student of Anthropology and a research scholar of the Manchester University he was also enjoying a scholarship from an American University. He regretted that he had come to Afghanistan about four months back and was waiting for permission to visit the interior of Afghanistan for his study, i. e. to talk to the people, to see their habitations, to observe their customs, to study their ways of life and also to take photographs. But the Afghan Government was so particular and so suspicious about foreigners that they would not allow any foreigner to visit the interior of the country, to talk to the people, or to take photographs. The Afghans always remember the trouble created by an English Missionary before the anti-Amanullah demonstration of 1930 when that Missionary with his long beards looking like an Afghan, fluently speaking Posh'tu and Persian, offering prayers in the mosque, passed off successfully as an

Afghan. But it was this Englishman who really created a feeling against Amanullah amongst the army and amongst the Ulama class. A similar tragedy also occurred in Trans-Jordan when Gulab Pasha, an English military officer created trouble in the Middle East. So, at the present moment, Afghanistan was not prepared to allow any foreigner to go into the Afghan villages, to talk to the people, or to take photographs, because these might be utilised against their country.

Naturally, our Dr. J. P. Sinha, though an Indian coming directly from a university and not associated with any diplomatic service, was not allowed to study the people, or the country, or to take photographs. In the end, the Government of India had to intervene through our Embassy and get permission for Dr. J. P. Sinha to visit a very limited area of Afghanistan in order to collect his data strictly under limitation and under specified conditions.

Mr. Moktedari, the Councillor of the Iranian Embassy in Kabul came to my hotel at about 7-30 A. M. A word about Mr. Moktedari is necessary for my record. He was the *Cultural Attache* of the Iranian Embassy at Delhi before he was transferred to Kabul. He gave me introductions to some of the people at the University of

Teheran and made certain recommendations about me to the Government of Iran and the University of Teheran. Mr. Moktedari also invited me from Kabul to be his guest on my way to Teheran. He was so kind to me that he invited me to stay with him at Kabul during my stay in Afghanistan. It is unusual that Iranians should invite a foreigner to be a family guest, rather they would entertain him in hotels and parties and offer him best of reception. But Mr. Moktedari was so frank, hospitable and obliging that I would remember his courtesy for all my life to come. He took my two telegrams to be sent to India. I insisted on payment of the postal charges, but he flatly refused because I was his guest. I was rather embarrassed. Mr. Chhadani hinted me that the Vice Chancellor of the University would be glad to meet me at 11 A. M. in the University and discuss the plan of my work in Kabul. At 9 A. M. Mr. Moketdari took me in his car and dropped me at our Embassy in the eastern part of the city.

At about 9-15, I met Mr. Ohri, the First Secretary of the Indian Embassy. I knew him by correspondence because he had replied to my letters written from India and from Iran. But at the moment he was very busy with the postal correspondence work, because next day i. e. Wednesday was the

mail day for despatch of communications to India and to other parts of the world connected with the Indian Embassy at Kabul and Iran. He phoned to Mr. Prem Sankar to come to his room and discuss my plan of work in Kabul.

Mr. Prem Sankar was already introduced to me the previous night and I had my dinner with him and Mr. Binny. This young man was recruited to the foreign service about three years back. He was a young chap but very penetrating. I found that this boy had been spoiled by the easy supply of smokes and drinks from the Embassy at 25% of the price in the current market. I think, within a few years Mr. Prem Sankar will spoil his health due to over-drink and over-smoking. I had also met an Indian young man Mr. S. K. Singh of Agra working in the Indian Embassy in Iran who used to drink 25 hours out of 24 hours in a day and all his brilliance of mind has been washed away by the easy flow of wine. There was another bright young man Excel Khan, the Commercial Secretary in the Embassy of India in Iran, who was a drinker from the tip of his toe to the top of his hairs. Really, I can't be a party to such an organisation which will be based on association with wine. They say, it is the best way to cultivate acquaintance with the

foreigners and soften their hearts through the medium of the liquid.

Mr. Prem Sankar told me that one Professor Mahammad Ali who was formerly at Delhi, Lahore and Peshwar, was now in the University of Kabul. He had already been contacted and I would meet him after I had met the Chancellor of the University to fix my University programme.

I was now introduced to Mr. Haskar, our Indian Ambassador in Afghanistan. I was impressed by this tall, fair, well-dressed gentleman approaching me at the door of the room with an amount of cordiality which I could not get in Iran. Without comparing him to our Ambassador in Iran, I would say that there was no formality about Mr. Haskar. He caught hold of my hands and put me on the sofa inside as if we were known for a number of years. He told me that he had read about me in Indian papers and also that he had seen my correspondence with the Afghan Embassy. He had received a letter from the I.C.C.R. of New Delhi about me. I now remember that I had sent to him a copy of my letter to the Vice Chancellor and Education Minister of Afghanistan. Our minister Prof. Humayun Kabir had also gone through my letters and correspondence with Iran and

Afghanistan and he also told me that my plan of work was 'exceedingly interesting'. Mr. Haskar wanted to know my scheme of work in Afghanistan and also the time I would be able to spare in Afghanistan. I told him that I should discuss the details with him after I had a talk with the Vice Chancellor about my programme with the University and after I had a knowledge of what the Government of Afghanistan wanted me to take up. After having a cup of tea with him, I was accompanied by Mr. Chhadani on my way to the University.

At 11 A. M. I went to the University and met the Vice Chancellor who was waiting to receive me according to the arrangement which had been fixed up with the *Cultural Attache* of the Indian Embassy.

The Vice Chancellor Mr. Ali Asghar was a middle-aged man, rather bulky with a clean shaved face, smoking cigarettes incessantly. He had a *karakul* cap on his head. He was very carefully dressed in American style. He talked faultless English with a touch of American accent. From his talk I could understand that he was an American by training. He asked me about our Prime Minister, Pandit Jawharlal and also about the educational progress India has made during the period of

our independence. Soon the Dean of the Faculty of Arts entered and I was introduced to him ; now we three began to talk. I told the Dean of the Faculty about the work I had begun in Iran, namely, the *Re-discovery of Iran* in which I proposed to include a chapter on Afghanistan. At once the Vice Chancellor flew up and said that it would not be fair to include the story of Afghanistan in a book on Iran because Afghanistan formed no part of Iran. Rather the Iranian culture of modern days has drawn much from the old culture of Afghanistan, from Firdowsi who was born in Tus in Khorasan and from Gazzali who too comes from Tus. So were Umar Khayyam of Nishapur and Jalaluddin Rumi of Balkh whose inspiration is still the greatest asset to Iranian culture. The present form of Persian language is, according to the Vice Chancellor, the gift of Firdowsi who was a court poet of the Afghan Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. It was Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni whose court was really the intellectual capital of the contemporary Middle East and nursery of Persian language in the 11th and 12th centuries. The Persian culture which is now found from Azar Baizan in the west to Khorasan, Qandahar, Kabul and even in Delhi in the east, is a gift of the court of

Ghazni. In fact, it was the *Dari Persian* (*dari* means valley) which is really the basis of modern Persian. The poets of Persian like Firdowsi, Unsuri (poet-laureate of Sultan Mahmud), Asadi (the inventor of martial verse), Faruki of Sistan, Ghada of Ray, Yamini (inventor of prose writing in Persian) and poetess Rabia bint Kalb of Quzdare were not Persian. The Vice Chancellor was so enthusiastic in defending the claim of Afghanistan that he asserted that the Afghans were now no longer going to be betrayed by Iranian propaganda. He was afraid, if they remain linked with Persia and Persian culture, the Afghans will lose their identity ; so the Afghans are going to take Poshtu as their national language, not Persian.

I understood my folly in touching the susceptible corner of Afghan sentiment by proposing to include a chapter on Afghanistan in my book on Iran. So I proposed to him immediately that if the Afghan Government and the University of Kabul would help me and arrange for collaboration with some scholars of Afghanistan, I would very gladly write a book on the legacy of Afghanistan. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts who was so long supporting the views of the Vice Chancellor suggested me that I should contact Mr. Kohzad, the

Director of the *Ariana* so that I might be posted with the facts relating to arts, architecture and the culture of Afghanistan. He also informed me that Professor Mahammad Ali would be a very great help to me because he was connected with the Governments of India and of Pakistan in different capacities for a number of years. Now he is a Professor in the department of History in the University of Kabul.

The word *Ariana* at once struck me and I caught the cue from the talk with the Dean and the Vice Chancellor. I wanted to know from him the background of the *Ariana* and the subjects connected with the *Ariana* publication. The Vice-Chancellor said that the present name Afghanistan was not known to the Afghans before the middle of the 18th century. This ancient land was known as Gandhara, Sistan or Khorasan,—*Ariana* has been mentioned in the Avesta (*Aban Yesht*) and by the Greeks as Areia ; the Ariana has got more connection with India than with Persia culturally. He claimed that it was Bactria (*Balhika*—Balkh) which was the original home of the Aryans. Recently it has been discovered that at least thirteen Hymns of the *Rig Veda* had been composed in Bactria. He also told that Zoroaster, the founder of the sacred Fire Cult,

was born in Herat. The home of Gandhari, the mother of Durjyodhan of the *Mahabharat* was in Qandahar or Gandhar. As a professor of History he asked me to consult the works of Prof. Hackin, Monsieur Griesman, Sir Aurelstein for study of India's connection with Afghanistan or Ariana. *Yama*, the god of Indians ruled here according to Avesta. He advised me to visit Kabul Museum and see for myself the treasures that were in that museum illustrating the connection between India and Afghanistan from the very ancient times. In fact, he said that Buddhism which had lost its vitality after 500 years of existence, was revived in Afghanistan by Kanishka who, according to him, was rather more Afghan than Indian. The word Afghan is not to be used to refer to Kanishka. Kanishka had three capitals, one in Purushapur (Peshwar), one in Hadda near Jalalabad and another in Bamian on the Russian border of modern Afghanistan. It was Kanishka who reformed Buddhism under a new form called *Mahayana* and spread it all over China, Central Asia and even in Turkistan. Considered in that light Kanishka was a child of Ariana.

I could read between the words of the Vice Chancellor and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts the spirit which animated a modern Afghan and the new

atmosphere in which the modern Afghans were living. Pakhtunistan is now live problem of the Afghans.

He then asked me to mention the subject on which I would lecture in Kabul and the places I would like to visit in Afghanistan.

The subjects fixed were—

(1) Contribution of Afghan hegemony to Medieval Indian History and Culture.

(2) Shape of Islam in India.

(3) Logic of Pakhtunistan.

He was more interested in the logic of Pakhtunistan because the Afghans were so sore over Pakhtunistan.

But I remember that Pandit Jawaharlal on the eve of my departure for Teheran had advised me not to discuss politics in Iran. So, I rather tried to avoid a public lecture on Pakhtunistan. Yet I could not tell the Vice Chancellor pointblank that it would not be possible for me to deliver a public lecture on Pakhtunistan as the Afghans might think that Indians were ignorant of the problems of Afghanistan. Before I left Teheran, I had been supplied by the Afghan Ambassador in Iran with a number of books, one of which was on Pakhtunistan. There was a map of Afghanistan on the wall with Pakhtunistan prominently displayed in bold letters.

The Vice Chancellor frankly had told me that it was a folly on the part of the Afghans to support the separation of the North West Frontier province of India upto the Durand Line from India on the eve of the Partition in 1947. The Afghans were be led to believe that the tribal peoples, if once are thrown into the hands of Hindusthan, might not be able to ioin the Afghans ever. But if they are outside Hindusthan and be included into Pakistan, the latter being a Muslim State and its population in the North West being primarily of Afghan origin, the Pakhtuns might have the opportunity to join the Afghans after separation from Hindusthan. But within three years, the Afghans and Pakhtuns were disillussioned. Pakistan instead of allowing the tribal peoples to join their racial brethren on the other side of the border, was tightening her grip over these ill-educated, ignorant and superstitious folks by subtle methods. At present, Pakistan is being dominated not by the people of the Punjab, or of Sind, but by the people of the Frontier who are Pakhtuns. They are trying to transfer their capital from Sind to Rawalpindi and not to Lahore ; and they will do it. The Pakistan army is now manned primarily by the Frontier tribes and their commanders are almost all

Pakhtuns. The dictator of Pakistan is a Pakhtun, he referred to General Ayub Khan.

The Vice Chancellor emphatically said that the heart of Pakistan beats in Peshwar. I pointed out to him that if the Pakhtuns have been won over by money and position by the Pakistan Government, how could the Afghans of today expect them to march with a country which is economically poor, culturally backward and geographically land-locked. Would not the Pakhtuns be a drag on the Afghans? The future of Afghanistan was certainly limited in scope, because of Russia on the north, Britain and America with Iran in the south and west. Being outside the Baghdad Pact, Afghanistan will, out of necessity, depend upon Russia as they are actually doing now. So sandwiched between two blocks, the Russians and the Americans, Afghanistan cannot breathe freely. The Afghans will have to depend on the grace of the British and the Americans for expansion towards the south-eastern regions, i. e. proposed Pakhtunistan.

The Vice Chancellor suggested to me that I should tell the Afghans that Pakistan is an intruder in Pakhtunistan; the frontier region now geographically described as Pakistan, really belong to Afghanistan; if the Pakistanis demand a *plebicit*

in Kashmir, why should they not concede the same privilege to the people of the Frontiers I told the Vice Chancellor that politics is not always logic, nor is it ethics. There will be none in the U. N. O. to sponsor the case of Pakhtunistan as was done in the case of Kashmir, because it was to the interest of a power block to stand for Pakistan. It was to the interest of these western powers to create an eternal sore between Pakistan and Hindusthan, Pakistan will be strengthened with the money and machines from America and diplomatic moves from England, but only to the extent that she would keep India busy so that India might not be too strong to disturb the balance in the mid-eastern politics, yet would remain sufficiently strong to defend herself. There is no such interest of the European powers in the matter of Afghanistan ; so Afghan' claim to Pakhtunistan would go by default.

The Vice Chancellor looked puzzled, and kept silent, or he was not prepared to understand my point. Again he pleaded his own point on the Pakhtun problem. The Afghans are very sore over Pakhtunistan. He finished by telling if India could sponsor the entry of China into the U. N. O. why should she be neutral in the matter of Pakhtunistan?

Regarding my lectures in the University, it was arranged that my first lecture would be on :—

The contribution of the Afghans to the Indian History and Culture,

The Second lecture on the *Shape of Islam in India,*

Third lecture on *the logic of Pakhtunis-tan.*

But it will be a sort of private symposium where selected men in high positions in the Afghan Government and University would be allowed to attend by special invitation.

I think in the end the Vice Chancellor appreciated my stand point in regard to choice of subjects of my lecture and it was fixed that my lecture would be in the University Hall on the 4th June. The subject would be *The contribution of the Afghans to the Indian History and Culture.*

By 12 noon, I met Mr. Kohzad, the President of Afghan Renaissance Club. He is the grand old scholar of Afghannistan who is respected all over Afghanistan as the pioneer of Afghan cultural renaissance. He is the founder of the *Ariana*. He had also been to India during the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the Asiatic Society. It was he who brought to India a famous idol of Siva

which was found on the foot of a hill on the outskirts of the city of Kabul, supposed to have been worshipped by the ancient Hindus in Afghanistan. I remember to have heard him speaking in the Asiatic Society in 1947. But I was happy that it was this savant Kohzad who had visited India twelve years back.

I asked Mr. Kohzad what he meant by his *Ariana*. By *Ariana* he meant that it is the real name of the land which is now known as Afghanistan, or Aryasthan. The *Ariana* is his paper, the medium of his cultural organisation ; the *Ariana* is the name of the society which is the meeting ground of the cultured people of Afghanistan. The school of Kabul is known as the *Ariana*. The air service of Afghanistan is known as the *Ariana Air Lines*. The athletic organisation of Afghanistan is known as the *Ariana Club*. Mr. Kohzad seems to be *Ariana* obsessed. He told me that the name Afghan is not really representative of the people inhabiting the land. It is the original land of the Aryans, though in later times, the Persians, Greeks, Turks, Uzbeks, Mongols. Safawis, Kajars in their turn conquered this ancient land. May be, they are Muslims by religion, but their culture is not Arab culture which is generally associated with

Islamic religion. To him the word *Ariana* was on less sacred than the word *Islam*. I immediately asked him if the modern Afghans are switching themselves away from their religion by insisting too much on the *Arianhism*. He empathetically shouted, "Certainly not, because the culture of a nation is its own. The religion is, of course, a part of that culture, but not the whole of a man representing his culture. An Afghan may accept Christianity, but that does not mean that he has ceased to be an Afghan". He pointed out to me that in India there were a large number of Christians, but they have not ceased to be Indians. Even amongst the Indians, there are Muslims who feel that they are Indians first and Muslims next. Afghanistan, too, has certain number of Jews, or even Hindus from India and they are not Muslims. Yet they are very good citizens of the *Ariana*.

He pointed out to me a painting on the wall of his office room in the *Ariana* building where a facsimili of a carving from the wall of Bamian has been displayed. The figures represented the Aryan type with Indian *turbans* and *choga* of the Kushana type and on the wrists of these figures there were Indian bangles and in their ears were rings in Indian fashion.

Mr. Kohzad then took up the question of Afghan language. *Poshtu*, he claimed, was purely Indo-Aryan and not Arabic. The connection between Poshtu and Persian is mainly through the medium of Sanskrit. Poshtu in its roots is really Sanskritic. The first Poshtu poet Amir Krór was son of Polad Suri, Governor of Ghor, a contemporary of Abu Muslim Khorasani (770 A. D.). Had Poshtu not been an ancient language of Ghor (Hirat), there would have been no poet of Poshtu in Hirat. Works of famous Poshtu poet Khush Hal Khatak (a contemporary of Aurangzeb) have been translated into several European languages. The whole family of Khush Hal was distinguished for poetic talents—Halimā (daughter), Ashraf Khatak (son), Afzal Khatak (grandson). This Afzal Khatak translated the famous Indian work *Kalila o Damna*, or *Anwar-i-Suhaili* into Poshtu. He asked me, “Do you know Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is a Pakhtun who drove out the British from India ? Mr. Kohzad was so much impressed with his own talk that he jumped up several times in his enthusiasm, pressed his hands against the table and made gestures which might do credit to any young lawyer burning with enthusiasm for his client's cause.

After he had finished his talk on the *Ariana*,

I politely requested him if he could join me in writing out an anthology of Afghanistan and contribute a paper to my proposed book—*The Legacy of Afghanistan*. I told him that my plan in Iran was to write a book under the title of *Rediscovery of Iran* and I also mentioned the names of scholars, who agreed to work with me in Iran. He knew Dr. Poore Dawd, Dr. Moyin and professor Nafici. On hearing my plan and also the gist of my talk with the Vice Chancellor, he agreed to contribute one article on *Ancient Afghanistan and Ancient India*. He gave me some of his works published in this connection and he asked me to come after two days to have a full discussion on the scope of the subject.

Incidentally, he narrated the historical connections between India and Afghanistan from classical and pre-classical times to the present day. He was proud to hear from me that Afghans had contributed to the Indian culture more than any of her neighbours whether from the north, or from the east. China, though she had religious inspiration from India in the form of Buddhism, yet she did not contribute to the formation of Indian race and culture. There was no intermarriage between Chinese and Indians, no linguistic fusion between India and China. China

was culturally benefited by India, but not India by China. Similar is the case of Tibet. Tibet is practically a religious colony of India, but Tibet herself did not contribute anything to Indian race, culture, or language

Similar is the case of Burma. The very name Burma comes from Indian *Brahma*. The Burmese religion is Buddhism. But to India's life and culture Burma's contribution is insignificant. The islands of the Indian Archipelago have developed as cultural colonies of India. But there is no trace of the contribution of these colonies to Indian culture. Of course, there are reasons for that, because, while a high mountain range separates China and Tibet from India; a vast sheet of water stands between the mainland of India and the islands of the Indian ocean. But no such insurmountable barrier stands between Afghanistan and India.

Mr. Kohzad asked me what was my reading about the contribution of the *Ariana* to Hindusthan. I told him, "the Chinese, Tibetan and Burmese and a part of the island population of the Indian Ocean are pure Mongolian, whereas the majority of the children of Afghanistan, (excuse me, I mean *Ariana*,) are Aryan, or inheritors of Aryan culture. I was interested in the process of the

Aryanisation of India. I have reasons to believe that Aryan migration to India started from a region now belonging to *Ariana*, that is Hirat. According to Indian traditions, the lands of the earth were divided into seven *Varsha* or *Desha* (regions) and waters into *Samudra* (sea). Modern Ariana was included into *Hiranmaya Varsha* (golden region) to the north west of *Bharatvarsha* to the east of *Ketumal Varsha* (modern Arabia). The most ancient king of Indian mythology *Yama*, according to the *Avesta*, ruled over a region known to the Persians as *Balkh*, to the Greeks as *Bactria* and to the Indians as *Balhikh* Gandhara, or Qandahara, as Indians believe, was the land of birth of the heroine of the Mahabharata, Gandhari, mother of king Duryodhana."

In a vacant mood, I narrated to that proud Afghan, "Afghanistan had conquered India several times. For instance, the oldest Aryan sacred book the Rig Veda was composed (at least 16 psalms) in Hirat, Alexander conquered north west of India from the Swat Valley, Bactro-Greeks conquered and ruled a considerable portion of north India for over two centuries, Bactro-Greek art and sculpture enriched Indian art and sculpture, Parthians of Indian history were from Khorsan. The Kushanas were from

Kapisa. It was the children Aryana who stood as walls against the Arab penetration during the early days of Muslim advance towards the east. Then came the exploits of Sultan Mahmud Ghazni and Sihabuddin Muhmmad Ghorī, the Khalji, the Lodi and Suri Afghans who were children of Afghanistan. They come and settled in India and completely Indianised themselves by marrying Indian women, adopting Indian customs and sometimes India names. In fact, their accommodating spirit made way for a synthesis between uncompromising Arabian Islam and assimilative Hindu culture. And the Indians being converted by the Afghan converts, there developed a new synthesis in Indian culture which was neither Hindu, nor Muslim. The modern composite Indian culture is less mushin and more Indo-Afghan.

“Further, it was the Afghan rulers from Ghor and the successors of Ghorī Sultans, generally known as Slaves, who saved India from the Mongol locusts. Had not Iltutmish turned out Chengiz Khan from the borders of the Punjab, Delhi would have been a second Baghdad. Ghyasuddin Balban and Alauddin Khalji stood as impenetrable walls against the waves of pillage, plunder, death and destruction throughout Central Asia. Did not the

children of the *Ariana* stand as bulwark against the Arab advance to India in eighth century for a hundred years? Can you imagine what would have been the fate of India if the Mongol Halaku had visited India?

"India should be grateful to the Afghans for what they did for India though their methods do not always speak to their credit."

I would read from his face that Mr. Kohzad was highly pleased to find an Indian so much interested in Afghanistan and he appreciated my approach to the subject of Indo-Ariana relations.

I came back to my hotel to have my lunch at about 1-30 P. M. and wrote out in my diary the talk I had with Mr. Kohzad, and with the Vice Chancellor. Indeed, these people were more frank and sincere than the average Iranians. The Iranians feel proud of their present culture which is half-Asiatic and half-European and less Islamic, more Western. The wealth of America has coloured their views. They earn abundant foreign exchange as price of oil through the U. S. A. In return, they get goods from the U. S. A. In the bazars of Iran, almost everything is America-made. From a match box to a jewel case, there is the U. S. A. stamp. It is not dollar by exchange for Iran, but is practically

a dollar forced by U. S. A. In Afghanistan too, there are abundant Russian goods. I wish to discuss it later, after I have stayed for sometime in Afghanistan and seen the details of their life.

In the evening, I got a phone from Mr. Prem Shankar to dine with him. I did not like to lose the opportunity and miss Mr. Binny who was also invited for the dinner in my honour. Mr. Binny of the British Embassy had been introduced to me last night. So I had some interest in going there to dine with Mr. Prem Shankar. At 9 P. M. I went to the embassy and from there I was escorted by a clerk who was waiting for me under the direction of Mr Prem Shankar.

Exactly at 9-15 P. M. I reached Mr. Prem Shankar's house which was about 2 miles from the embassy. It was a nice little house, quite big for a young bachelor compared to the house of Mr. L. N. Roy, our First Secretary in Teheran. The house of Mr. Prem shankar was certainly smaller. But it was a recently built one and still the construction was not complete. The peculiarity of the house was the colour of the lights from the entrance of the building to the dining room on the first floor. Every room had a bulb of different colour matching with the colour of the wall in

contrast. The furniture was all made of chromium plates and the cushions very much matched with the colour of the plates. But the cushions were costly and on each cushion there were 2 or 3 books left carelessly lying. I was visibly impressed that this young man Prem Shankar was so fond of reading and the title of the books indicated that his interest was not confined to history alone. There were books on philosophy, politics, science, history, literature and also half a dozen American magazines with plenty of advertisements of wine and cars. About half an hour after came Mr. Binny of the British Embassy.

Immediately Mr. Binny sat down to drinking and almost drank half a pint of beer as if he had not quenched his thirst for a week. Practically, he was simply drinking the bottle. The question of pouring water, or soda into the liquor, came after half the bottle was consumed. When his primary thirst was quenched, he just opened his mouth and extended his hands. He said that it is not fair for me to be so dry when my host was so wet. However, I satisfied him by smoking a few cigarettes, but I could not compensate the liquid by mere smokes.

Then we began to talk about the Afghans. Mr. Binny gave me his experience over Khorasan and

Hirat—his exhilarating journey over the mountains and the deserts and through the old relics of the cities destroyed by the Mongol hordes in different periods of history. There it was the month of spring. Scarlets, tulips, poppies, wild roses decorated the hill sides. In the midst of arid land, one would be delighted to find villages buried in their orchards. The vast green fields along the river Hari Rud lent a delightful feeling to the eyes of a new comer. Mr. Binny continued, his journey to Meshad, capital of Khorasan, was most exciting. It lies through a fertile valley surrounded by hills dotted by meadows. The city of Meshad has an overhead screen of poplar trees which often appear as a “golden domes”. Actually, the dome of the famous mosque of Iman Reza is up as decorated by a large dome of turquoise blue tapering a slender minaret.

Mr. Binny described the Bazars of Meshad within the city walls of dried clay having gorgeous gates at regular intervals. It is a city of mosques and bazars ; along the banks of a flowing streamlet runs an avenue north to south. The shrine of Iman Reza, the eighth Imam of the *Shias* has a museum, though small in size, yet rich in collection of delicate pieces of fine arts, ornamental manus-

cripts and painted pages. On the way twenty miles, east from Meshad, lies the great poet Firdushi at Tus in his eternal sleep in an impressive and dignified tomb. Mr. Binny talked almost literature. His voice was sweet, his sentences were pithy, his eyes were penetrating, but sometimes a sense of superiority overshadowed him and his talks, in spite of his caution.

He asked me about India. I referred him to Mr. Prem Shankar. But Mr. Binny told me that Mr. Prem Sankar was a top official and he does not want the official view on India, but he prefers to talk to a non-official ambassador instead of an official representative. Official views and methods of official expression are often regimented. As I was a Professor of History and with quite a fair amount of experience in travelling at my back, he was very eager to discuss the Middle East which I had seen fifteen years back and the Middle East which I was seeing to-day.

Mr. Binny talked to me with an air of superiority which is common to the Britishers in diplomatic service. He gave me very little of his mind though he wanted to know my whole mind. Incidentally, he referred to Professor Allan Grant and Professor Wilson who were in Teheran with me. Professor

Allan Grant was very sincere in his opinion though he did not like to publicise them. Professor Wilson of Cambridge was rather frank. He was in a hurried mood, because he was going to Copenhagen to be married there within a month's time. Mr. Binny told me that though his stay in Afghanistan was short, only three days—he was impressed by the sincerity of the Afghans and the naturalness in their ways of life. About the Russians, he was reticent ; about the Americans he was rather suspicious. From his incidental words, I could feel that an Englishman neither likes a Russian, nor an American. America is his rival ; Russia is his enemy Yet he would prefer, at the present moment, Russia to counterbalance the penetration of the Americans into the fields which were so long monopoly of the British. There was a touch of formality in the talk of Mr. Binny though he wanted to talk more freely. Yet I could gather from his manners that a diplomat should hear more and talk less.

At about 11 O' Clock in the night, we finished our dinner and talk, and we departed. Mr. Prem Shankar had his eyes almost closed due to excessive drink. Possibly, he was new in the field. But Mr. Binny was more strong on his feet and came down up to the gate of the house to put

me into the car which would carry me to the Hotel Kabul.

June 3.

I got up from my bed at 4 O' Clock and took my morning exercise. I shifted to the new block of the Hotel Kabul where there were arrangements for hot and cold water and everything was modern. The sky was still covered with half light and half darkness. The road in front was practically the Mall of Kabul where four roads met. There was the trotting sound of the donkeys which were brinning merchandise from distant villages into the city. The village girls in their *borkha* (veil) had come with the small vegetable baskets on their heads. Some of them were carrying the baskets of fruits in both hands besides the vegetable baskets on their heads and the child tied behind their backs. It was not possible to see their faces, because faces were all covered. So. I could not exactly know how they were feeling the weight of their loads. As light was breaking through the cover of darkness, some hackney carriages of the type of the old Victoria carriages of India, drawn by mules, were visible and those carriages were full of merchandise for markets, and some carts carried stones for the purpose of building roads. Soon

after, in front of the door of the hotel, came two buses with marks of *Ariana Air Lines* to carry passengers to the airport because the airship would take off at 6 O' clock punctually. Then passed a row of auto-buses which would go to the bus station on the bank of the river Kabul. They would start at 6-30 A. M. for Ghazni and Qandahar, to Hirat, to Mazar Sharif (Balkh) and to Jalalabad (Hadda), and Torkham on the Khybar Pass. I was a very interested spectator, because I wanted to know as much as possible about the people more from the commonfolk than from the persons at the top. I marked their dresses, I heard their talks, I noticed their gestures and enjoyed exchange of hot words between passengers and conductors. This is in the way as we get in India. In Iran, people generally do not shout, but they whisper. They are polite. In Afghanistan, they shout and call by names. They easily come to blows at the slightest opportunity. That was not noticed in Teheran.

After half an hour, I came back from the balcony and had my free-hand exercise. After taking my bath at 6-30 A.M., I ordered for my early tea. Then I wrote my diary of the previous day and also prepared a little note for my lectures which I was

expected to deliver in Kabul. At 8-30 Mr. Chhadani came from the Embassy to take me to Mr. Haskar, our Ambassador, to report to him the talk I had with the Vice Chancellor of Kabul. Mr. Chhadani handed over to me a letter of invitation from the Ceyloneſe miſter who was ſtaying at the ſame hotel with me to attend a cocktail party between 6 and 8 P.M. in the lounge of the New Hotel Kabul. Juſt then, the Private Secretary of the Ceyloneſe Miſter knocked at my door and perſonally invited me on behalf of the Ceyloneſe Miſter to attend his cocktail party.

At 9 A.M. I arrived at the embassy and had a talk with Mr. Prem Shankar who was ſtill then not being able to ſhake off the exhaustion of the previous night. I was very ſorry for him, becauſe ſo brilliant, ſo ſharp, ſo nice a young man as Prem Shankar was ſpoiling his health by exceſſive drinking. He ſmokes about 50 cigarettes a day, he drinks and drinks, I do not know how much quantity. I aſked Mr. Shankar why he liked to ſtay in Afghanistan and not go to other European countries which would give him better opportunity of knowing the world, inſtead of being in this benighted and out of the way land cut off from the reſt of the world. He told me that he

wanted to stay in this country because he liked this country. The people are very responsive to human approach. They have much in common with the Indians. They are yet unsophisticated.

Mr. Haskar, our ambassador, was impatient to talk to me and he just knocked at the door of Mr. Prem Shankar. It was rather unusual for an ambassador to come to the room of a subordinate. But he could not wait. He wanted to know the talk I had with the Vice Chancellor the day before in Kabul. I gave him in details my talk with the Vice Chancellor and told him that the Vice Chancellor wanted me to arrange some scholar from India, who would be sent to Kabul to be taught Poshtu and on return, he would fill up the chair of Poshtu language in an Indian University, preferably at Aligarh, Delhi or Calcutta. I had asked him why he chose Calcutta for a Poshtu Chair. He said that Calcutta where *Islami History and Culture* was taught as a full and primary subject in the Post-graduate stage, might have the courage to take up Poshtu as a subject of study ; Poshtu derived its inspiration from Sanskrit and Calcutta is famous for Sanskrit learning in India. Anyway, the ambassador was pleased to know that the Kabul University had promised to train an Indian scholar

in Poshtu at the Kabul University voluntarily. The ambassador also regretted that formerly there used to be Poshtu broadcast for the tribal peoples in Pakhtunistan and also in Kabul. This will be a good means of communication between Afghanistan and Hindusthan, which will go a great way to establish closer relation between the two countries. Considering the relation between India and Pakistan, a closer approach to Afghanistan is vitally necessary. Mr. Haskar then whispered his mind about the programme of our External Affairs and incidentally, he referred to our foreign missions. This I should not disclose here in my diary. What I felt was that "all was not quiet on the Western Front." A re-orientation of our policy and methods is vitally necessary. But this much I can say that Mr. Haskar is a man of very high stature, both in mind and in body. He is a very popular ambassador. He offends none, but pleases many though he avoids many more. There is more familiarity and less formality in his way of talk. He was convinced that the Government of India does not like to hurt the feelings of Pakistan Government at this stage by publicising about the Pakhtunistan problem which is claimed as 'Pakistan's own domestic affair'.

Mr. Haskar asked me to move the Government

of India for revival of Poshtu broadcast and to arrange for some good Indian professors who might take up appointments in Afghanistan, may be for a short time. This will go a great way to communicate with each other on a higher level. The Afghans are really very responsive. At the present moment, the people of Afghanistan look upon India as an 'elder brother' and so long as this feeling exists, India should take advantage of a cultural approach to Afghan.

After my lunch, I just went to take a stroll in the bazar on the bank of the River Kabul and see for myself the common folk, observe their ways of life, their dress, manners and also the Indian portion of the town on the southern bank of the River Kabul. (The city of Kabul is divided by the River Kabul ; to the east is the old city, to the west is the New city.) I found quite a large number of Indians, almost all of them with long beards and big turbans signifying that they were Sikhs. I did not like to talk to them at the present moment. I wanted to know more about them from the Afghans first, then I would have time to meet them, or their Secretary of the Indian Association in Kabul. These people were generally cloth merchants and tea merchants. Many

of them were money-changers. Their job was to transfer cash to India through *Hundi* system. That was a profitable business because Afghan ratio to Indian rupee is favourable to India. One Indian rupee is equal to ten *Afghani* which is the medium of their common exchange. For one Pakistani rupee you get only six *Afghani*. So the value of the Indian rupee is 40 per cent higher than the Pakistani rupee. Exchange ratio is the barometer of confidence on Indian financial stability in Afghanistan. On the door of bank, you find the rate of exchange written on black-boards. Even in the Kabul Hotel, there is an exchange department run by the local banks where you find the rate of exchange between *Afghani* and the Pound or Dollar ; even of the ruble of Russia as well as the Indian rupee and Pakistani rupee.

On my way back to the hotel at about 3 P. M., I bought some cherries, nuts, grapes, apples and pears. But the grapes and apples were not good. Of course it was not the season. Compared to Indian price of fruits, they were at the ratio of 2 : 5. But I was told that when grapes and apples came from Qandahar to Kabul, the price would be about 1 : 8 i. e. what you will pay in Kabul will be 1/8th of what you will pay in India

I just peeped into a shop where you find Persian or *Karakul* cap. The Persian cap refers the cap from Hirat and Hindukush though it is wrongly called *Persian*. This cap is made of lambskin. Lambs are killed as soon as they are born or sometimes mother is killed to get the skin of still born lamb. So, the hide is very soft and the hair of the hide is very glossy, curly and silken. If the lamb is allowed to grown even for a month, the hide becomes harder and the hair becomes rather dry and stiff. Though it is very cruel to kill these small lambs within one hour of their birth, yet the profession of peeling out their hide and then tanning them for the purpose of making caps, is a very popular trade and quite a large percentage of Afghans trade balance is due to this trade in so called Persian caps. The usual price of a Persian cap is 250 Afghanis i. e. about 25 rupees in Indian coin. They are of very beautiful colour, some white, some brown, some black and others white and black mixed. One-coloured skin fetches a higher price whatever may be the colour. They are also used for making Sash in England, Germany France, U. S. A., for ladies practically all over Europe. The average annual export of lamb-skin is three million pounds. Wool

of lamb is much in demand in Europe and U. S. A. today.

It was now about 3-30. P. M. To the left of the road, I found the signboard in Persian *Amjadali Multani*—money changer for India and Pakistan. The word *Multani* at once struck me. How can an Afghan Muslim have the title the *Multani* unless he has some connection with Multan, a city in Western India. I entered the shop and asked for the rate of exchange. At once a tall, clean shaved gentleman with a tanned face asked me in a very soft voice and in faulty English if I was an Indian. I nodded and said, 'Yes'; and then he asked, 'A Pakistani?' I replied, "I formerly belonged to Pakistan but now I am an Indian." He asked me again—'a Muslim'? I only uttered *Alhamdulillah* which means praise be to Allah. That was sufficient to tell him that my religion was Islam. He now began to talk to me in Persian. Then on giving my reply in Persian, he was convinced that I was a Muslim. He offered me a cup of coffee and spoke very courteously to me as if he had discovered lost connection with India. I asked him why he used the *Multani* at the tail of his name. He stretched his hand and shook mine and with a vivid smile, he said, 'My ancestors were from Multan'. Then he told

me that there are many Afghans who used *Multani* at the end of their names, because after the conquest of Multan by Sultan Mahmud Ghazni a large number of captives were brought to Ghazni—many of them were artisans and architects—to rebuild and to beautify the city of Ghazni. There was a large number of Indians from Multan who were drafted to Afghanistan for cutting stones and building mansions. Then he said that these families were not at all willing to forget their Indian identity. So what was left of India in them, was their title *Multani*. I asked if all of them were Muslims. He replied, 'Yes, not one of them was allowed to remain a Hindu.' I asked him whether these families were now living in Ghazni 'Not one Ghazni', he said, 'but most of them are in Kabul' and some of them are in Qandahar. because when Muhammad Ghorî conquered and destroyed Ghazni, most of the Indian settlers left Ghazni and found shelter in cities out-side.' I enquired if they still retained some of their Indian customs. He said. yes ; in our marriages generally we confine ourselves to the *Multani* clan and we feel a little pride in the name *Multani*. We do not go to marry with frontier tribal families, but confine ourselves to hereditary aristocracy of Afghanistan and some of

our lullaby have an Indian touch. There is a tradition in Afghanistan that the girls from Multani families are very fond mothers, good nurses and are devoted to family ties. This may be due to the Indian heretage. It was getting near 4 O' clock, so I had to bid good-bye to him. He invited me to dinner, or a lunch any day I liked. As my time was very much booked, I could not promise to accept his hospitality ; but I told him, 'Certainly, I would drop in some day whenever my time permitted and be introduced to the members of the *Mullani* society.' He came down to the door and bade me good-bye. I was very much struck by the sincere welcome and generous behaviour of this unknown Indian. Possibly only tie between us was that I was from India and he was from Multan, a part of India a thousand years back.

At five in the evening I had my bath, had a second shave, a change ; and I went to attend the cocktail party of the Ceylonese Minister. I entered in the big hall of the new Kabul Hotel on the other side of the office of the Ministry of Information. I was rather early and purposely so, because I wanted to observe the way of approach to these cocktail parties which, I thought, would be different from what I had seen in

Iran. Cocktail party means a party where wine flows and guests drink to their hearts' content. Afghanistan being an orthodox Sunni country should not allow a cocktail party to be celebrated in a holy land of Islam. I was in Arabia, the land of the orthodox muslims. I could feel that Iran was rather slack in her outlook because she was a country where all types of people meet and which has now become an international centre of diplomacy and political wire-pulling as such Iran could allow wine to flow just like the water of Zinda Rud, the life giving river of Isphahan. I wanted to know whether the Afghans would join the cocktail party and would drink there, or the cock tail party would be confined to foreigners and diplomatic personel only.

There were men from embassies of Russia, Iran, Italy, Indonesia, and France and many other countries whom I did not know. Soon after, I found a large number of Afghans holding high position in the Government and in the Diplomatic service as I could discover from their dress and demeanour. None of them had their beards to signify that they were Afghans, nor their turbans as we find amongst the *Kabulis* in India. The *Kabulis* in India are not people from Kabul, nor

from Qandahar, but are people from Frontier, from region between Peshwar and Jalalabad. People of Kabul do not use turbans as we find in india. In villages, you will find beards but in cities like Kabul and Qandahar you do not find beards now. The aristocracy of Afghanistan has taken up European fashions.

I was introduced to three or four Afghan officials and I found them drinking against the tradition of Sunni Islam. I was told that most of them had come from America, or Russia and some even from England. Of course, I did not find a single Afghan woman in that cocktail party. The presence of women was a common feature in Iranian cocktail parties, but no woman was here. Suddenly, I found its Russian Cultural Secretary whom I had once met in Calcutta in the Asiatic Society while I was the Secretary. So, the Russian who was in Calcutta naturally felt a sort of kinship with me and he told me that he liked Bengal very much. He said that I was the only Bengalee he had met in Kabul and from my fluent English and tanned face he could easily take me for a Bengalee. Then we began to talk on various things concerning Afghanistan. He wanted to know my exact purpose for coming to Afghanistan, I explained to him that

my object was to know more about the Afghans, because these Afghans were the first Muslim people who conquered India permanently, and the influence of Afghan culture was still fresh from the foot of the Khyber Pass to the banks of the river Sutlej, even up to the banks of Jamuna on the other side of Delhi. In fact, our culture from Delhi to the Khyber Pass had more in common with the Afghans today than with the Mughals of Samarqand and Bokhara. It was the Afghan people who made compromise between Islam and Hinduism on the basis of give and take. Had the Arabs conquered India, they would have certainly *Islamised* and *Arabicised* India as they had done in countries like Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. Historically, India was conquered and Islamised by the children of Afghanistan, who themselves were converts. India being converted by the converts, there were many gaps between *Arabian Islam* and *Indian Islam*. Afghan people are fairly orthodox, but not as much they appear on the surface. Beneath their long beards and flowing over-coats there is a human touch of affection and affability which have been symbolised by Tagore in his immortal story known as *Kabuliwala*. He asked me what

I meant by *Kabuliwala*. I then narrated to him the story of basic Afghan Sentiments emotions immortalised by Tagore and he was very much pleased to find that an Indian had been able to see beneath the rough exterior of a child of Kabul and discover what generally remains unseen.

The Russian told me that I should certainly visit Samraqand and Bokhara which are now under the control of U.S.S.R. and see for myself the transformation which had occurred there under the Soviet Rule. But he said, "still You can find a touch of Islam all round the city specially in villages, in mosques and minaretes and even there are Russian Muslims who offer Islamic prayers and the Soviet Government do not prevent them from offering prayers though there was much propaganda that U.S.S.R. had insulted Islam and abolished religion. He asked me to make contact with the Board of Muslim Religion in Taskend so that they might arrange to invite me, or at least to give me facilities to study Islam in Samarqand. I was very much interested in Samarqand because it was the homeland of Timur and the land of the ancestors of Babur, whose desendants had conquered and ruled India for over 350 years and whose culture, I specialised throughout my life. The Russian

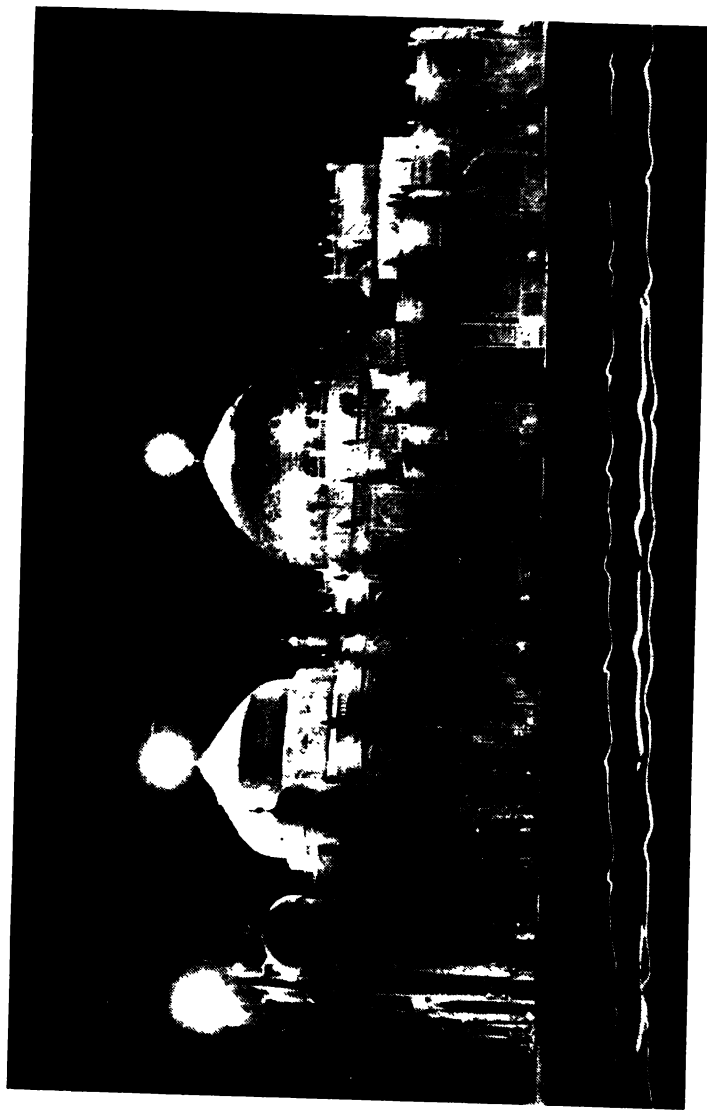
requested me to meet him again in the Russian Embassy and told me that he would give me letters of introduction to the Board of Muslim Religion in Tashkend and also to the Bureau of Foreign Culture in Moscow.

I met Mr. Moktedari, the Iranian Councillor, in the cocktail party. He invited me to visit Ghazni with him. I was anxious to visit Ghazni and it was a very welcome opportunity which was offered to me of his own accord. It was fixed that some day next week we would start in the early morning at about 6 A. M. and come back by 9 P.M.

Mr. Prem Sankar, our Cultural Attache, phoned to me at night that Professor Mahammad Ali of the History Department of the University of Kabul had invited me to have tea with him next day at 4 O' clock. We would discuss the scheme of my proposed work—*The Legacy of Afghanistan*. The Vice-Chancellor of the Kabul University had directed him to contact me about my scheme and finalise it. I was looking for this opportunity to contact the Department of History so that I might know the attitude of the modern educated Afghans towards their ancient culture. I heard that Mr. Mahammad Ali had served in Delhi, Lahore and Peshwar. He is a man from Kabul,

but has married a Kashmiri Muslim lady and therefore, it would be in the fitness of things that I should contact him for reasons more than one.

At about 10 0' clock at night an officer of the Afghan Ministry of Information informed me, the Ministry had arranged a visit for me to the Museum of Kabul which was still in the making and that Mr. Moktedari would pick me up and him too. We should start at about 8 0' clock in the morning after break-fast and it would have only about three hours to have a running view of the museum, because it would be closed at 1 P. M. It was really a good opportunity for me that I should have with me a man who knew the local people there in the Museum and also the details of the deposits and *curios* in the Museum. I had already heard that the Kabul Museum is one of the richest museums in the East after the Cairo Museum. I had already visited the Cairo Museum in 1944 and also the Museums of Jerusalem, Damascus and ancient museums of Beirut and Balbek in 1945 and the Tehran Museum recently. It was one of my richest recollections that I had seen the museum of Balbek on the outskirts of Syria near the Caucasus Mountains and also the museum of Tripoli where the ancient Roman relics were to be found in all their glory.



A Mosque at night in Afghanistan.

In my ecstasy at the prospect of visiting the Kabul Museum, I could not sleep at night. I was really waiting for the day to break, because one of my life's most cherished dreams would be realised if I could have a look at the ancient Indian relics of the Bactro-Greek period, of the Gandhara art as well as of the objects of the Kushana period in their original forms. I did not know when the night ended and the sun came up in the horizon.

June, 4

At about 4 0' clock in the morning, I rose up as usual by the call of the *Muazzin* from a mosque on the other side of the Mall. As usual, I had my bath, my exercise in the morning and then went out to the bank of the river Kabul to have a view of the murmuring waters of the river. Of course, the river was there ; but there was no murmuring because there was no flow in it. The Kabul river starts its journey of 286 miles from the Paghman Range 11500 ft. above the sea bed. It is joined by several mountain streams at Logar near Kabul ; before it reaches the capital near Jalalabad, it is joined with the famous *Panchsir*. Finally, the Kabul River discharges into the famous Sind river in the Punjab. The Kabul River was now an apology for a river, yet it brought to me reminiscences of the

Tuzuk-i-Baburi, the auto-biography of Babur. Babur dreamt to be buried on the bank of the river Kabul and his body was actually brought over to Kabul from Agra to be buried there in the famous Garden of Babur. I crossed the bridge to the other side of the river and walked about a mile towards the Garden. Too many thoughts passed over my mind—I am to visit the famous Garden before I record my impressions. I came back to my room and taking out a book on the architecture of Afghanistan just ran my eyes over it. Soon the hotel boy brought me my breakfast. I hurried through the breakfast and got myself dressed up, took my note book and a pencil ready for the visit to the Kabul Museum.

Fifteen minutes before 8 0' clock, another officer and Mr. Moktedari reached the door of the hotel and began to blow the horn and I rushed down the steps because not a minute was to be lost.

Five minutes and we started for the Museum. Mr. Moktedari pointed out to me a monument on the way. It was the English Tower of Victory built up just on the gate of Kabul to the north of the Kabul River, in memory of the victorious entry of the English army after the disaster of the First Afghan War. I gazed at this monument and asked how this Tower was being tolerated by the Afghans

as it was a monument of insult on the breast of Afghanistan designed to commemorate the victory of the hated English. The Afghan official who was with us narrated with pride that every visitor is told the story as to how 20,000 English soldiers with the exception of one Dr. Burns had been completely wiped out by the Afghan heroes. The structure of this monument was nothing impressive, but it was strong and massive though not tall in height. It had a running balcony on all sides from which the entire city of Kabul could be viewed all around. Only one day in the year, the Afghans come here and celebrate their *Slaughter of the English*. There are local ballads commemorating the glorious exploits of Akbar Khan and our Afghan companion recited the ballad with his eyes beaming.

We were now half way towards the Kabul Museum. On the way we were shown some of the ancient buildings of stones which looked like forts and many interesting exploits of Afghan heroes were narrated by the Afghan official who was in our company. These stories are still current in the grandmothers' tales in Afghanistan. It is also an established custom to compose ballads and sing songs commemorating the heroic deeds of their ancestors and these ballads are transmitted to posterity

through the medium of mothers, grand-mothers and village elders. Though a bearded Afghan apparently looks rough and fierce, really he is not so. He has a soft and responsive corner in his heart beneath his rough exterior.

On the way I had a long talk with Mr. Moktedari about the difference between a village Afghan and a village Iranian. It was interesting to find Mr. Moktedari drawing a delightful and dashing picture of an Iranian, whereas the Afghan gentleman with us giving a very soft and subdued picture of an Afghan always stressing on the naturalness of their character. I felt from the talk that the Afghans are what they were, while the Iranians are what they had been. In the midst of these interesting discussions, our car stopped at the gate of the Kabul Museum.

On the gate of the Museum there was an inscription of Kanishka brought from Sork Kotal (Red Fort) in 1943 which was dedicated to a goddess named *Oaniando* for victory over the Greeks dated the second century A. D. The inscription was in *Brahmi* though the Goddess *Oaniando* was a Greek one. This dedication to a Greek goddess indicated that Kanishka, though a Buddhist, honoured a Greek goddess and that there was a war between

the Greeks and Kushanas in which, certainly the Kushana king came out victorious.

We began to climb up the steps of the Museum and just in front there was a very big bowl which, they said, was a Buddhist one discovered in Qandahar. This bowl was sustained by eight lotus petals turned upside down. It was the foundation-stone of a small Buddhist Stupa decorated by petals in stone with inscriptions. It was put upside down and was used as a bowl in a mosque at Qandahar wherefrom it was taken direct to the Kabul Museum. In that mosque at Qandahar, it was used for the purpose of reserving water for ablution of Muslims before prayers. The inscription round the bowl was in Persian and it was dated the 15th Century A D. I was told that the inscription had been photographed and there is a copy in our Embassy which I expect to get from them. In this inscription it is mentioned that the mosque in which this bowl was found, was under an *Alim* (Teacher) who was given a grant for the purpose of maintaining the mosque and teaching the students. The name of the teacher is also given there. (No photographing allowed inside the Museum).

While crossing the stairs, we were questioned by

the curator—at least by one who posed himself as a curator. He wanted to see my permit for admission before he could admit me into the collection rooms and he also demanded my identity. The Afghan officer who was with us, said that I was a Professor from India invited by the University of Kabul as a guest. So there was no question of showing the permit for entry into the Museum. Yet the curator insisted on my permit. The Afghan officer contacted the Education Ministry over phone and at once a message came to the curator saying that Dr. Choudhury, an Indian Professor, was going to visit the Museum and that all facilities should be extended to him. The curator now changed his attitude and begged to be excused for interfering with my free access without meaning any offence.

To the left of the room, we were shown some earthen jars for preservation of cereals and food grains. We were also shown some cereals which were found in their original form in Hadda, (a capital of Kanishka) and in Nuristan (Kafiristan of medieval age and Sivastan of ancient age).

We now went upstairs ; to the left and right of the staircase, there were a large number of guns, swords and other varieties of arms hung up. They were exhibited for the visitors, but none of them



Discovered from the burial ground in Sibstan (Kafirstan)- an Indian replica
Kabul Museum

belonged to periods earlier than the 18th century. Some of the swords were unusually big in size, heavy in weight and studded with jewels and diamonds. There was one sword of Ahmed Shah Abdali who is so famous in Indian history, though there was some doubt whether he could use it. Anyway, the sword was just Afghan-like, both in weight and in length. On the walls at the middle of the first floor, there were oil paintings of the Afghan Sultans of the 19th century and one of the portraits was painted by a Bengali Indian artist of Delhi, and that was the best amongst the whole lot. But the Afghans did not appreciate the portrait drawn by the Indian artist, because the face of Afghan hero had the softness of an Indian.

The first room in the first floor was called the Bagram Room which represented the Kushana collections. In the Bagram Room met three civilisations—Greek-Roman. Indian and Chinese. These three civilisations were destroyed by the Huns and only their remnants could be discovered here and there. Amongst the collections, the cup, claimed to be Alexander's cup for drinks and his toilet case in ivory, were unrivalled. It is said that they were made by craftsmen from Hind. In one of the collections of the Bagram Room, I found

a large number of bronze statues made in India. The tomb of a Greek type was placed on a small stone pillar and it exactly was like what



Buddha image in Kabul Museum
(Greek style)

statues of Buddha, small, but extremely graceful to look at. These statues were cut out of single pieces

I had seen in Jerusalem on the tomb of the Antonine Royal Family. On the surface was placed a marble representation of the figures inside the tomb, and this was exactly a replica of the body that lay in eternal sleep inside the tomb. It was not symbolical, but it was the actual representation of the dead interred inside.

There was a large number of

of marbles and stones and some were so small in size, so accurate in lines and exact in features that they look like the small gods in south Indian temples, but without the heavy curves of the India statues.

To the north corner of the room, there were some figures cut out of a single piece of ivory. Interesting figures were some standing sea animals, having the body of a fish with the face of a man and that is strange, because Afghanistan has no sea. So, possibly the idea was brought by artists from Greece which is a land surrounded by seas. But these statues were certainly of the Kushana



Buddha image in Kabul Museum in Hindu-Greek style

period of the first and the second century of the Chirstian era.

Along with it, I found a large number of Indian ants carved out in stones whose colour was like that of Indian brown-red ant. Each ant was carrying a piece of grain of white colour, passing from one hole to another. The subject matter of many of the ivory works was Buddhist in conception, but they were Greek in execution. It was practically a representation of the Kushana life and art in ivory.

The collections from Kabul and the neighbourhood are deposited in the Kabul Room. Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan ; Kabul is a province, Kabul a kingdom by itself. The city of Kabul has an elevation of 8900 ft. above the sea level surrounded by rocky mountains. Kabul is strategically important. Formerly when the army used to come on foot, or on horse, Kabul commanded all the passes from the north through the Hindukush, from the west through Qandahar. Through Kabul passed the invasions of Alexander the Greek to India, of Sultan Mahmud the Ghaznivite, of Changiz Khan the Mongol, of Babur the Chagtai, Nadir Shah the Irani, and Ahmad Shah the Abdali. But, from the time of Babur down to Nadir Shah (1526-1738 A. D.) Kabul was a part of India, as she had been since the time of

the Mahabharata, of the Kushanas of Takshila, and of the Shahis of Udbhandpur (Wund in the Punjab). So traces of connection between India and Ariana had a special appeal for me. No Muslim country has so close, so direct, and so long a connection with India, as Ariana has. I naturally became interested in the Kabul Room of the Museum.

The remains of art and architecture in Kabul room have been collected from the vicinity of Kabul, from Tapeh-i-Khazana, Tapeh-i-Maranjan, and Khwaj Safa. The marble statues of the *Surya* (sun), a Hindu divinity is remarkable. It was found at the foot of the Qutla-Sork about eight miles from the present city of Kabul.

In the Costume Room was collected the weapons used by the Afghans in different ages, dresses of ancient Afghan Amirs, womens' jewels and decorations ; on the walls along the stair case were portraits of Amirs of recent times. But, there was no portrait of any queen of the country which was so common in Iran, Egypt and India in the Mughal courts. In Iran, I have seen the pictures of queen Suraya (now divorced) almost on every wall of the city, on every cover of a book, on every advertisement of a beauty shop or saloon, on the screens of a theatre or cinema hall. In Kabul, the

appearance of the Queen in the open is unthinkable, because the veil is a part of feminine life there.

The Coin Room, as usual in all museums of the world, was of absorbing interest. But the Kabul Museum was of unusual interest, because of the long period it covered and variety of numismatic treasures deposited from the Grecian period to the Nadir Shahi period—i.e. from the 4th. century B. C. to the 20th. Century A.D. The coins are arranged dynastically and chronologically. The whole history of Afghanistan could be traced from the coins, their wealth from the purity of metals, and their sense of beauty from the decoration of the coins. The larger finds came from the Indo-Parthian, Scythian and Sassanian periods; of course, Islamic coins of the Arab, Iranian, and Mongol periods are naturally largest in number.

Just outside, about 150 yards apart, is the Manuscript Room. There are about a thousand Mss. exhibited in that room. Most of the collections relate to the Islamic period of the Ariana history. Many of them were the Mss. of the Quran and in Arabic, Persian, or Poshtu. The Cufic writings i.e. writings of the Cuneiform or angular form were very decorative. What attracted me most was the calligraphy, the bindings of covers with letters set

in gold and the pictorial decorations inside and outside. There was no Indian book in the Museum though the Timuria Library of Cairo, the Zaheria Library of Damascus and the State Library of Tehran contained Mss. written by Indians. It was now 10' clock and we had to leave. I am to visit the Museum again.

5th. June

The whole morning on the 5th. of June I passed with Professor Mir Husain Shah. He is a professor of the department of History in the University of Kabul; but formerly he was a student of the Lucknow University and as such, he felt a sort of kinship with me and looked upon me as his own professor. He was a student of Dr. Nandalal Chatterjee of the Lucknow University, who was a very good friend of mine. Dr. Chatterjee was for sometime a common centre of our discussion. We also talked about Professor Nagar of Lucknow



Decorative Calligraphy

University, who, in 1942, attended the Baroda Session of the Indian History Congress with me.

Professor Mir Husain Shah helped me in translating my lecture on *the contribution of the Afghans to Indian culture* in elegant Persian. He also promised to supply me some books and periodicals for the purpose of my proposed book on *The Legacy of Afghanistan*. For about two hours, we discussed the plan of the work and drew up a list of the proposed subjects which would be embodied in my proposed book. He also suggested certain important places which I should visit during my stay in Afghanistan.

In the meantime, I received a telephone call from Mr. Moktedari asking if it would be possible for me to lunch with him. He begged to be excused as he could not invite me earlier, because he was waiting for a friend of his to fix the time for lunch. That friend was Dr. Zhobal who was known to me already. Dr. Zhobal was the Information officer of the Government of Afghanistan and he would be pleased if I could meet him in the lunch. Mr. Moktedari said that it would be in the interest of mine and my book as well, if I would meet that high official. I was told that some important Government publications would be made available for me

through his friend. It might also be necessary for me to contact the Education Minister and chalk out a plan of my engagements in Kabul. So, I agreed to join him in the lunch. It was a Friday and everything was practically closed. Mr. Moktedari also told me that his other friends might meet me at the lunch.

Exactly 15 minutes to 1 P.M. Mr. Moktedari sent his son and a car to take me to his house.

I entered the house of Mr. Moktedari at exactly 1 P.M. He was ready there with his two sons and two daughters and his wife to receive me. His wife was an Iranian and one of his daughters was born in India while he was the Cultural Attache of Iran in India. His eldest son is now reading in the Medical College at New Delhi. This boy seems to be very intelligent, clever and very well-mannered; the boy has extremely high ambition. I asked Mr. Moktedari why he had sent his son to India for education. He said that the Medical College in Iran is not very well equipped, though some of the teachers have roaring practice. Even if there is a good student in Iran, he is not recognised until he has a foreign degree. The degree in Medicine may be had from Lebanon, France, Switzerland, or U.S.A. But at present,

medical education in India is also very well recognised in Iran. His son wanted to study at New Delhi where he developed many contacts during the last five years. He told me that his son was very bold even at the age of eleven. He wrote a letter to His Majesty, the Shahanshah of Iran, sympathising with his Majesty for the accident that took place at the gate of the University when the latter was shot at and wounded. His Majesty Shahanshah was pleased to recognise this letter of his son and he sent him a photo as a souvenir showing his bandaged hand and bandaged head. The audacity of the son made the father nervous lest his Majesty would make the father responsible, but all the anxiety of the father was relieved when the son's letter was acknowledged by His Majesty with his own signature and a souvenir with it. The son was sure that his ambition of having a big career would be realised in due course. Master Moktedari told me that after finishing his education in India, he would go to Paris and then to America wherefrom he would get his education and then take to medical profession, and find his way into the politics of Iran. The boy said that it was easier to approach people of high station as a physician rather than as a politician. People in high position as well as

the common people, may easily be approached through medical assistance because men are weakest when they are ill. I was astonished to find that a young boy 18 or 19 years of age had been thinking of his future and making a plan.

Mrs. Moktedari, who had just been out of the hospital after a dangerous operation in Kabul, could not move. She was always occupying a chair and just, by way of courtesy, she was offering us toffee. She was smiling all the time and told me that she liked India very much. She said that she hoped to visit India in future, not in her private capacity but as the wife of the Ambassador of Iran in India. The youngest son of Mr. Moktedari was always curious and would not utter a word. He was always taking chocolates and biscuits and cherry, oranges and apples. The mother disclosed that her son did not like to spoil his time by talking ; instead, he was always busy with his mouth and hands. The elder of the two daughters was really a beauty amongst beauties. I have seen in Iran real beauties, but one of her type could not be easily found even in Iran. She was only about 14 and she looked younger. Innocence was imprinted on her face. She was certainly the best example of Aryan grace, I have ever seen. She offered me a cup of lemon juice,

because her father told her that I did not drink wine. In the embassy there was always provision for drinks of various kinds. Mrs. Moktedari told me that she felt very much astonished to find that a man with my experience had not touched wine. I humbly said that my mother had asked me never to drink and told her that ours was a family of feudal lords of the 18th century when our ancestors had only two passions, war and wine ; and they lost themselves. So my mother had promise from all her sons not to touch wine. I was true to her even though she was no more in this world. We had talked about half an hour by this time.

Dr. Zhobal, the much coveted guest and his wife arrived for lunch. This lady was sickness personified. She was covered with fantastically heavy dress so that the poverty in flesh might be compensated by the wealth in dress. After mutual exchanges of good wishes, Mr. Moktedari said that Mrs. Zhobal had come out of the hospital after nursing a baby. She said that Mrs. Zhobal was much interested to talk to me because she had never before talked to an Indian. She was an Afghan by birth, her mother a Khorasani by blood and her father was Irani by domicile. So she combined in her three cultures—

Irani, Khorasani and Afghani. Mr. Zhobal was very much interested in me because as an Information Officer he wanted to give me every information about Afghanistan and their future national plans. He told me that Afghanistan had a plan in imitation of Russia's Five Year Plan. The plan included building of dams, roads, canals, air ports, schools, hospitals, industries and opening mines. But there will be no deficit financing policy as in India. He said, "National development must be according to the national assets and not at the cost of mortgaging the nation. We have no right to starve the present generation for an unknown future." He promised to give me some literature on Afghanistan's plan and invited me the next day to his office where he would make arrangements for my visits to places of interest in Afghanistan.

We sat through the lunch for about one hour and a half. The dining chairs were brought from India and the decoration of the dining room was more Indian than Afghan, or Iranian. He was proud of adopting the Indian way of decoration and wanted to give visitors the impression that he had been in India. I noticed that he had developed sort of kinship with India and he wanted to maintain that kinship even when he was in Afghanistan.

I requested him to collaborate with me in writing my book on Afganistan. He told me that he had written a book on proverbs of Iran and he was at present more interested in finishing his own book. He wanted a book of Indian proverbs. I promised to send him one.

The lunch with which he entertained me was really a luxurious one. It reminded me of the ambassadorial dinner in Iran specially the *Chelo Kabab*. The Chelo Kabab was an integral menu for the Iranian dinner, or lunch. The *Chawal* or rice is fried with butter and the rice is practically half burnt before it is boiled. The *Kabab* is nothing but minced meat made softer by soaking it in vinegar. The Iranians like Chelo Kabab most. I also liked it. After the lunch ended, he gave me a bottle of *Pepsi Cola* which is rather unusual in Kabul because it is a product of Iran. We had a cup of tea after lunch and then I left him at about 3-30 P.M.

Coming back to the hotel, I sat down to write my article on *the shape of Indian Islam* which was to be one of my subjects for my lectures in the University.

Professor Husain Shah came to me at about 6-30 P.M. and he gave me a copy of the *Ariana* on the art of Bamyān written by Dr. Khozad and also a

pamphlet on the Art of Afghanistan containing the discoveries by the French Mission.

He regretted very much that the work of the foreign Missions had been suspended because of the quarrel between the Italian and the French Architectural Missions. The condition on which foreign missions are allowed to work in Afghanistan is on 50 : 50 basis. Of whatever these foreign missions discover, 50 per cent are reserved for the parent country and the other 50 per cent for the nation who sends the Mission. It is told that the French Mission at the beginning was very charitable but gradually they began to take away the best of the treasures and left the crumbs for Afghanistan, because the Afghans did not know the value of the discoveries and their inter-relations and links with the exsisting treasures. When the Italians came, they disclosed to the Afghans how the French Mission had cheated them. In return, the French Mission also told the Afghans that the Italians were cheating the Afghans. As such, these recriminations went on for some time and the work of exploration has been suspended.

At about 7 O'clock in the evening, Mr. Roger, the young German boy who had been my fellow passenger from Teheran, came to my hotel to take

me to the house of his mother for tea. I was so grateful to him for his assistance in the Ariana Plane when I became sick that I could not disoblige Mr. Roger. Though I was tired, I had to accept his invitation. We reached his mother's residence in western north end of the city by a *Tonga*. His mother lives in a small rickety old house. We went up the wooden stairs which were struggling to survive the pressure of our feet. She begged to be excused because she had invited me to a place which was a very sad contrast to the luxurious Hotel Kabul where I was residing. I congratulated her because she had a son like Roger who was so kind and helpful to a stranger whom he would possibly never meet again in his life.

The drawing room into which we were ushered, was a bed-cum-reception-cum-dining-room. In fact, her residence was a one-room flat which served all her purposes except kitchen and the bath. On a small table was spread a light carpet where lay several dishes of biscuits, cakes and fruits. There was a large number of cigarettes and she was smoking incessantly. After the usual exchange of courtesy she told me that she was living in this small room for the last eight years. This boy Roger had come to visit his mother and also to do some repair

and over-hauling work of some German automobiles. This boy was working in Berlin as an apprentice in an automobile factory where he earned about 200 *marks* a month. But it was not sufficient for his education. So, every year during holidays, the boy comes from Berlin to work in the German Embassy as a mechanic for the German cars and other kinds of German vehicles. Perhaps, I looked a little blank at this. She marked my astonishment. She went on saying that she had another boy who was working as an apprentice in a naval dockyard at Bremen and she had to send at least a thousand *marks* to her two sons in Germany. In the noon, she earns the money by working as a Secretary to the Ariana Air Lines in Kabul. At night, she works as a teacher for the children of German employees of the West German Embassy in Afghanistan. In the morning, she cooks her food herself—a simple one, practically a one-course menu. She saves all her money for the education of her two sons. After some conversation with me, she disclosed to me that she had been divorced by her husband who is now in Argentina. Her husband went there after the war being released from a concentration camp in Russia. There he married a Argentina lady aged 50 while he was 64. She does not

expect, nor does he get anything from her husband for the education of her two sons. She is so loving to her children that she calls each boy once a year to Kabul. They get three-fourths concession in the air fare from Germany to Kabul, because she is an employee of the Ariana Air Office and this concession is given to the children of all the employees of the recognised air establishments all over the world. While she was talking about her two sons, she was proud that her boys were shaping as she liked them to shape.

Just at that time, she took the head of her boy in her breast and caressed him as if she was an Indian mother. I also told her that as an Indian, I believed in rebirth and it might be possible that in her previous birth she was an Indian lady because the way in which she was caressing her son and her glowing face were typically Indian. She told me at once that possibly she was a Bengalee mother who was so fond of her children. I asked how she knew about the Bengalee mothers and their affection for their children. She told me that she had visited India several times—Peshwar, Lahore, Delhi, Agra and Benaras. In Benaras, she had stayed with her son in a hotel where there was also a Bengalee family. She remembered her

Bengalee acquaintance very fondly. She admitted that she could not possibly be more affectionate than a Bengalee mother. I told her that it might be possible that she was a sister to me in her previous birth and she at once kissed my hand and said that from that day I was her brother. She besought me that she would be grateful if I did not forget her.

I told her that it might be possible for her son to get a billet in Rourkella in India where there was an Engineering firm of German contractors. Her son had already been offered a job there, but she did not like to send the child just then for earning, because he had not yet completed his full course which would be done after a year's time. This boy Roger had also been offered an appointment of thousand *marks* in Hirat, as a mechanic for German automobiles. The Germans do not appoint any body except their own men in technical jobs because they do not like to teach foreigners their complicated system of engines and machines. So, if her son would get the full and final training in Germany, it would be easy for him to get a job on a very lucrative salary.

She said that she liked Afghanistan very much and preferred to stay in Afghanistan till both the Germanies East and West were united

together. She said that formerly she belonged to East Germany, but now after the war was over, her children were living in West Germany. Again, as she was divorced by the old husband of West Germany, her children had lost their nationality. In spite of her protest, they could not get the nationality either of the West or East Germany, though the passport mentioned that they were West Germans. Anyway, I said that in India there was no difficulty in this respect. After five years of residence, they could change their nationality and if they liked India, they might stay there permanently. I was astonished to find how the mother was so astutely planning for the future of her sons. She was every inch a German lady with great affection flowing beneath her heavy German exterior. She told me that she would be very happy if I correspond with her and with her son Roger. In the meantime, I should send her a tin of *Rasogolla* (Ball of sweet juice) which, she thought, was the nicest sweet in the world.

At about 10 P. M. I left her house. This time Mr. Roger brought me by another road—a very spacious one, lined with electric lights and the road was very strongly built. Mr. Roger told me that it was a Russian road. There was a large

number of roads built by the Russians from different points in Northern borders connecting all of them with Kabul. Near the crossing of the road there was a big mosque built by Afghanistan with the money of the Americans which was called the Blue Mosque to match the Mosque of Samarqand which the Russians had built in imitation the Blue Mosque of Timur.

I was not surprised to find how the Russians and the Americans were competing with each other to get the sympathy of the Muslims whatever might be inside their mind about Islam. I saw a large congregation coming out of the mosque which had gathered there to enjoy the oration of a *mulla* because it was a Friday.

At about 10-30 P.M. Dr. J. P. Singh informed me over the phone that Mr. Prem Sankar was down with appendicitis. I promised him that I would go to see him next morning because Mr. Prem Sankar was so kind to me and he was so charming a company.

6th. June.

Throughout the morning, I was very busy writing my diary and collecting materials for my proposed book on the Legacy of Afghanistan. At about 9-30, Professor Mahammad Ali with Professor Mir

Husain Shah came to my hotel and we had a long talk about the possibility of writing a book on the lines of Arberry who had written a book on—The Legacy of Persia. Professor Mahammad Ali gave me two books—one on *the Manners and Customs of Afghanistan* and another on the *History of Afghanistan*. They were rather pamphlets and not books, intended for foreigners and beginners. Yet I appreciated very much his gifts. He told me that he had an article on the Asokan inscriptions of Qandahar written in Italian and another in French. He promised to give me a copy of the article in Persian next time.

At about 11-30 A. M. I went to Mr. Khozad of the Ariana. He showed me some paintings commemorating the relation between India and Ariana. He said that the Afghans should always speak in terms of the *Ariana*. He frankly expressed that the Arabs had done much harm to the culture of the Afghans while the religion of Islam did not. He said that yet he had no quarrel with the Arabs, but he had with the Iranians. The Iranians who claim Persian to be their national language never recognise their debts to Afghanistan. It was Afghanistan under Sultan Mahmud Ghazni that had really given the shape to the Persian which we find to-day. It



Fort of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni

was under his patronage that everyday one hundred poets met in his court and no one could get admission into the court unless he recited at least one poem of his own composition. Some of these poets from immortal Firdawsi, the poet laureate, Unsuri, the *qasida* writer and Asadi, the inventor of strife poem (*Munazara*), had left permanent marks on Persian literature. Khorasan, the home of Firdawsi, was at the time of his birth under Sultan Mahmud Ghazni. The great Shah Nama claimed to be the national epic of Persia, in fact, Central Asia, was written under the inspiration of Sultan Mahmud Ghazni and this national epic is the greatest work in Persian literature. The Persian which Sultan Mahmud encouraged was the Persian of the valley called the *Dari* Persian.

Mr. Khozad promised that he would more closely co-operate with me in regard to my scheme of my book. He said that he would give me two articles at least and actually he gave me a printed article on *the Survival of Indian Architecture in Afghanistan*. He also told me about the contribution of Afghanistan to the foundation of the Indian culture. The *Vedas* and *Avesta* were composed in Ariana; *Yama* the first Aryan king ruled over Bahlika, or Bactria which was the first

Aryan settlement. The Avesta mentioned Bactria as the Beautiful city of High Flags. "*Bakhdim Sarivam Ordove Darapham.*" Actually, Zarothustra was born in Balkh. Alexander established Alexandria in the east, *Alexandria-Arya* in the modern city of Hirat, *Alexandria-Prophentasia* in Seistan and *Alexandria Arachosia* in Qandahar and *Alexandria* under the Caucasus near Bagram in Kapisa. Alexander, in fact, crossed Indus from Ariana. Magasthenes was a Greek officer in Qandahar before he was appointed at the court of Pataliputra. Within eight years of Alexander's death, his Greek followers lost their contact with their motherland. They intermarried with the Ariana people Mr. Khozad claimed that the Bactro-Greeks who conquered a large part of Northern India were, in fact, the children of Ariana that had no connection with the Greeks. Strabo said, "The children of Bactria made themselves masters of Ariana and India." The architecture of Ajanta was more Bactrian than Indian or Greek.

Mr. Khozad was very enthusiastic when he said that Buddhism was spread to Central Asia and China from Bactria in Afghanistan by an Ariana Buddhist, Kansihka who contributed to the re-vitalisation of Sanskrit language and literature. The Kushanas



Gilji's painting — A caravan at rest

were precursors of the Guptas. The Kushanas of whom India is so proud for their services to Buddhism, were naturalised Afghans. Kanishka carried his arms to the region surrounded by four rivers,—the Oxus, Ganges, Indus and Tarus, and even beyond that into Sinkiang and Kashgar. His summer capital was Kapisa (Bagram, south of Hindukush, north of Kabul), and winter capital at Purushpur and a third capital at Taksila.

A branch of the Kushanas ruled in Kabul under the title of *Brahmanshahis* over region extending from the opposite bank of the Indus, south of Kuram valley, present Dera Ismail Khan and west-wards to Seistan. These rulers were also known as *Ratbil*. These two dynasties Brahmanishahis and Ratbils stood as sentinels against penetration of the Arabs into India for a hundred years. When the Turks and Mongols were threatening the gates of India in the 13th century, the Afghan rulers—Qutbuddin, Iltutmish and Ghyasuddin Balban stood as guards to defend the gates of India.

India's connection with Afghanistan is not merely sentimental, but it is based on historical association. Ariana gave to India her first Vedic hymns, her epic heroine Gandhari and her Bactro-Greek art in Ajanta. India gave birth to a

new Buddha, no doubt, and Asoka started spreading Buddhism ; but Asoka's Buddhism with its lofty negative approach to life, was dying out when an adopted child of Ariana (Kanishka) gave it a new lease of life in a practical form which common man could understand, realise and practise. It is the Kushana form of Buddhism that spread in Central Asia, China, Japan and in the Far East. It is all credit to Ariana.

To Ariana, India owes a debt of gratitude for saving her from Chengiz Khan. the Mongol, a scourge of man and civilization.

Mr. Khozad felt relieved that he could give vent to his pent up thoughts to a man who could understand him, appreciate him. He insisted that India should establish more close relation with Afghanistan so that the two lost brothers might make an honest attempt to revive a common culture on the basis of a common soul. I came back from Mr. Khozad's office, refreshed and inspired.

At about 1-30 P.M., I got a phone from the Vice-Chancellor telling me the time of my lecture on Sunday. He also promised me to make arrangements for my visit to Bamian in Bactria. Bamian is the home of the Buddhist art. The largest statue of Buddha—a rock-cut statue—is 175 feet high and

there are several other statues of Buddha—one of them is 120 feet high. There are a hundred more of different sizes. The large number of statues



175 feet tall Buddha Statue at Bamian

carved out on the mountains and hills go to prove that the inhabitants of the locality, the aristocrats and the common men, were inspired by Buddhist ideal; they looked upon making Buddha statues and offering prayers to Buddha as one of their principal aspirations of life. Similar ideals have inspired art in Ajanta and Elora in India. One of

the wonders on the ceiling of a cave is the painting of Indian girls playing flutes.

In the evening, the Education Ministry sent a car for me and an officer to take me on the other side of the river Kabul for a visit to Babur's Tomb and his Garden. We took the zigzag route to reach our destination where the great Mughal Badshah Babur was enjoying his eternal rest. I was very anxious to have a stroll in the Garden of Babur about which I have read so much in the auto-biography of Babur. As time at our disposal was short, we turned to the right and moved towards the Tomb of Babur. I thought that it would be something very grand and glorious of the type of tombs of the Mughal emperors in India, such as Humayun's tomb in Delhi, Akbar's tomb at Sikandra and Jahangir's tomb at Sahadara, not to speak of the tomb of Shah Jahan's consort Mumtaz Mahal at Agra. But Babur's tomb in Kabul was an apology for a Mughal tomb in India. Even an ordinary Amir of the Mughal period had a more gorgeous resting place in India after his death. Only the tomb of Aurangzeb at Daulatabad was simple, because Aurangzeb did not like to have a gorgeous habitation for him after his death. Babur's tomb was not even like the tomb of Jahanara in

the outskirts of Delhi near the tomb of her patron saint Pir Nizamuddin Awalia. Jahanara's tomb has its own story to tell because she did not want even 'a candle to burn on her grave'. She wanted a blue sky to be the canopy over her eternal resting place, only grass to grow over the grave where the bulbuls might sing and the cool murmurs of the flowing fountain might be the music of her eternal sleep. Babur, a poet as he was, never desired a gorgeous resting place. But he would be satisfied simply with the murmurs of the flowing river of Kabul which he would enjoy from his garden of eternal slumber.

We moved to the right of the rest house which the Government had built just on the edge of Babur's Garden. Here was a big tree, some say, about four hundred years old. It was brought from India along with Babur's dead body and since then it has been growing and growing in spite of all the storms and hurricanes. The tree stands in its own glory. Let him believe who is happy to believe that romantic tale of an eternal tree. To the right of the lane leading towards the grave, we just moved up to a moderate-size pool of waters where the water was coming from a spring from the top of a mountain on the east. Formerly, there was a

Madrasa to the north bank of the pool ; now the Madrasa is being used by the pious muslims who come to offer prayers to the tomb of Babur. There was an attempt made by the ex-king Amanullah to rebuild the entire surroundings and to restore the Garden to its former glory. Though Babur was a Mughal, still the Afghans feel it an honour to be associated with a glorious monarch, who, as a ruler of Afghanistan, had conquered the land of Hindusthan. But before Amanullah could finish his pious work,



Babur's tomb at Kabul

cruel hand of fate came upon him and he had to quit his kingdom leaving his work unfinished.

To the right of the alley, we had to creep beneath some centering planks which had been used for rebuilding the

broken portion of the Tomb of Babur. We found three Afghan girls washing their clothes in the dirty pool which was temporarily constructed for



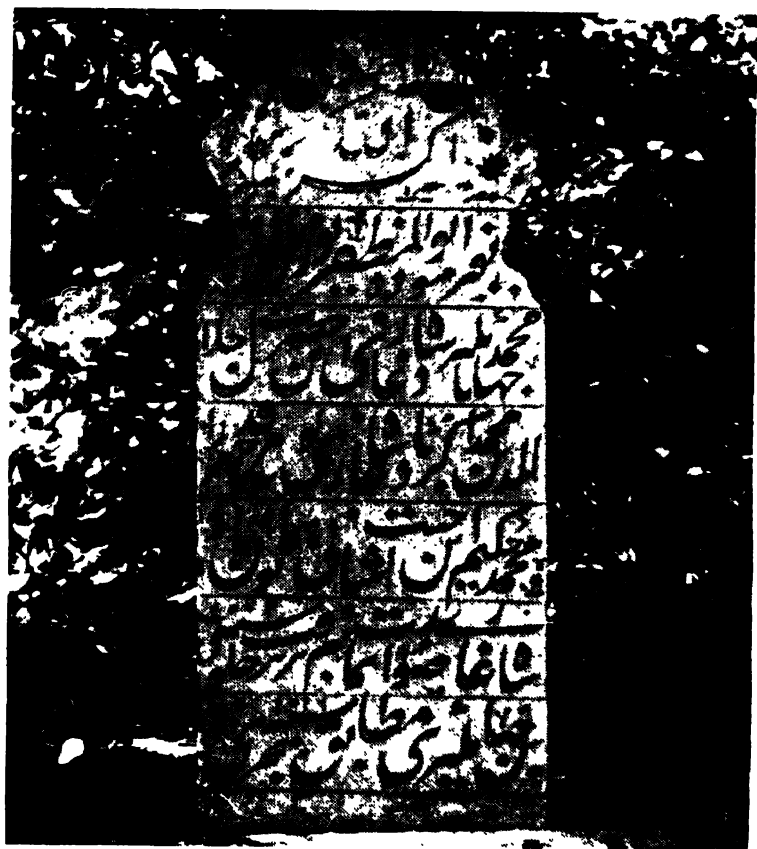
Tomb of Mirza Hindal, son of Babur, in the Garden of Babur at
Kabul-built in the 26th year of the reign of Jahangir,
and Dr. M L Roy Choudhury sitting.

the purpose of storing water to be used by the masons. A little to the left, there was an elevated ridge which had been dressed into a small valley. Lo ! The tomb of Babur was there. There was no canopy over the tomb, no garden around the tomb and no decoration outside the tomb. It was simply a marble structure where the name of Babur, the year of his death (937 A. H. = 1530 A. D.) and a little description of his ancestors are just written in block letters on the white marble. There was also the name of Nuruddin Badshah Jahangir who had built this tomb of Babur in Kabul in 1016 A. H. during his first visit to Kabul. Shah Jahan also visited Babur's Tomb. To the left of this Tomb, there was also the tomb of Mirza Hindal who was killed by Kamran's followers in a night attack, while he was only 34. Jahangir placed a stone tablet on the grave of Mirza Hindal. There is also a tomb on Mirza Hakim who died of excessive drink at 32. Jahangir had also a tomb stone on his grave which lay by the side of his grand father. A little to the east of Babur's eternal resting place, there is the tomb of the grand daughter of Babur, Raqia Begum who had laid her mortal remains in Kabul.

On the way, we stopped at *Chihil Satun*, a royal guest house (Forty-Pillared House). The very name

reminded me of the great Chihil Satun which I visited in Isphahan where Humayun, the son of Mughal Badshah Babur, was entertained by Shah Tahmash in the forties of the 16th century A. D. The Chihil Satun of Kabul is a very big royal palace where distinguished foreign visitors, specially the royal personages, are lodged and entertained. It has a garden covering 500 acres with a house where there are forty doors and not pillars. All the forty doors of the building are of the same size, same decoration and same structure. The balconies and the porticos of the garden around the doors were exactly similar. Unless one knew very well the details of the construction, he would be bewildered and it would be difficult for him to find out the exact room which he wanted to enter. A formal permission is necessary to enter into this palace, but as we were going in a state car flying the royal flag of Afghanistan, there was no need for any permit.

We drove back through a wide road lined with poplars. Our car stopped before the *Darul Aman*, 'the abode of peace', which was designed by the late king Amanullah who intended to transfer his capital from Kabul to the outskirts of the city, eight miles to the south. This palace was planned on Russian model by a German engineer and it was



Tomb of Mirza Hakim, son of Humayun in the Garden of
Babur at Kabul (built by Jahangir)

half-constructed when Amanullah had to bid good-bye to his favourite Darul Aman. This Darul Aman contained five hundred rooms with a big semicircular court-yard where parade of a thousand cavalry could be demonstrated. Each room on the ground floor was one hundred feet in length, one hundred feet in breadth and fifty feet in height. Now this building is being used as the state store where the Public Works Department is housed. Just to the west of Darul Aman, was planned a very big garden where specimens of rare trees of all the countries of the world, were collected and planted. It is told that this garden was planned as an enlarged edition of Babur's Garden. So, I became more interested in this garden of Darul Aman which is about one square miles in area. There is an artificial canal very well laid inside the garden, hyphenated by bridges. There are eight gateways in this garden, all of them meeting at a common point in the centre. The garden is now, of course, not well looked after, because to maintain such a huge garden, a huge amount of money is required. So, the present Government is just maintaining the apology for the garden. At about 7 P. M. we came out of the garden and passed through that famous road called the *Rah-i-Rusi* (the Russian Road)—planned by the

Russian engineers, constructed by Russian workers and maintained by Russian Government. This road is now under the new Seven Years' Plan of Afghanistan. This Seven Years' Plan of Afghanistan has created a great sensation in Pakistan because a well-planned, economically sound, thoroughly reoriented and militarily strong Afghanistan would be a great menace to Pakistan.

The Afghans are afraid that with the help of America and Britain, Iran in the west and anti-Pakhtun Pakistan in the east, may force them to accept their aggressive demands. Already from Khorasan Iran has launched a plan to advance east-north and Pakistan is extending her frontiers through Beluchistan up to the gates of Qandahar from the east. The proposed transfer of capital from Karachi to Rawalpindi is a very ominous portent for Afghanistan. The new capital will be a base of an attack on Afghanistan from Peshwar through Torkham and Khyber Pass. Afghanistan is insisting on delimitation of the Durand Line and Pakistan is determined to maintain the Durand Line. As such, the Afghans are being thrown into the arms of Russia. Russia has already constructed six roads connecting Russia with Kabul. The roads are so constructed that Russian forces may be drafted by

land into the heart of Afghanistan within a few hours' notice as quickly as Bismark did from Berlin to Sadowa in 1866 A. D. Baghdad which was so long the centre of diplomatic activity of the Middle-East has now yielded to Teheran and the next step will be to shift it to Qandahar where a new international air station is being constructed with American money.

We came back by that Russian Road and I heard interesting stories about Pakhtuns from Dr. Zhobal and the Afghan officer who were with me. Both of them wanted to know my reaction on the harsh words which they had uttered about Pakistan. Naturally, I had to become cautious in my answers, though I was rather prolific in my questions.

We reached our hotel by about 8-30 in the night after going round the whole city including

Bala Hissar where Sher Darwaja and Shaikh Barontai



Bala Hissar --a traditional royal residence
destroyed by the British—now rebuilt.

meet. Bala Hissar was the residence of the Ratbil rulers when it was overrun by the Arabs. The Arab capital stood in this fort city till it was destroyed during the Afghan War by the British army in 1879 A. D. Bala Hissar has been now completely reconstructed and there is a military centre here where annually parades are demonstrated on the New Year's Day. We took a circuit round the royal palace of H. M. Zahir Shah which was the old residence of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. On this very site stand the buildings of the Ministry of Education of Foreign Affairs, Isteqal College, Zarghina College and Hotel Kabul.

On the suggestion of Dr. Zhobal, the driver of the car took us towards the new city Sher-i-Naw known as Sherpur after the name of Amir Sher Ali, an unfortunate protege of the British after the Second Afghan War.

The streets of Kabul presented a beautiful sight due to blue neon tubes and yellow electric lights. The roads were wide and clean, lined with modern buildings. Taking circuit round the city we visited some parks well designed and well maintained. I remember the park of Bustan Sarai, the famous garden founded by Mirza Ulag Beg, uncle of Babur. I was told that the present site of Russian

Embassy stands on the Shah Reza garden founded by Babur's aunt.

I wanted to visit some mosques, because I am interested in mosque architecture. I visited some of the finest mosques of the world in Jerusalem, Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, Agra, Delhi, Ispahan, Teheran, Siraj and Qazvin. I wanted to have a look at the Kabul Mosque. Dr. Zhobal was pleased that I evinced an interest in mosques.

Our car turned towards the oldest mosque of Kabul, Shah-i-Shamseriah on the bank of the river Kabul. Then we went to the *Idgah* mosque in the east of the city near the Muhammad Khan bridge. It reminded me of the splendid mosque at Mazhar Sharif at night.

7th June.

On the morning of the 7th June, I was just having my breakfast in the Kabul Hotel facing the great Maidan overlooking the river Kabul. Suddenly I found a young man with curly hairs, pimpled face, sharp nose and long flowing Pajama, wearing an American Jacket with newspaper cuttings printed thereon. He was just pasting some posters on the wall of the hotel. The posters described in bold letters *Gulji*. Next line was 'Painting exhibition in the American Embassy' and two of the paintings

were printed on the posters. Throughout the city of Kabul, every day I chanced to see the same posters, on the motor cars, on the air-carriers, on the cinema halls, on the shops in the market, on the walls of the bridge and even in the museum. Everywhere these posters were very profusely pasted. When I found these posters being pasted on the wall of the sitting room of the hotel, I looked at the man who was pasting them and I asked him where this exhibition was to be held. He asked me if I were an Indian and I said, 'Yes'. He introduced, 'I am a Pakistani *Pakhtun*'. He just came and sat by my side. I offered him to share with me my breakfast. He immediately ordered the boy of the hotel to bring his breakfast there. We had our breakfast together. He invited me to attend the exhibition in the evening at 5 0' clock. I looked at his face to see if he was Gulji, the painter. He could read my face and introduced himself, "I am Gulji." I begged to be excused, because in the evening I had a lecture to deliver in the *Adadia* of the hall of the University Law College and the subject would be on "The Contribution of Afghan Hegemony to the Medieval Indian History and Culture". I said, "I would be very glad to visit your painting next morning but not to-day."

Mr. Gulji said, "Why do you not come in the noon as it will be open throughout the day till 10 0' clock in the night ?" I told him that it would not be possible for me to go that noon because an American tourist would come to take me to the museum of Kabul. Mr. Gulji said that he would also then come to the museum and on the way he would take us to the *Hajari Najari* (which means a stone cutting factory) on the way to the museum. He told me that Afghanistan is very rich in *lapis lazuli* stones, and the Afghan Government have started a factory with German experts, and one of the principal sources of foreign exchange—both dollar and pound, is the lapis lazuli stones. So it was arranged that we shall go to the museum at 10 0' clock with that American tourist and on our way would visit Hajari Najari and also see the working of the famous factory.

The American tourist, Mr. Donlin was from California. He was half lame of right leg. Possibly it was due to an epileptic attack, but he felt so fit that he had actually moved from America to London and then to France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia and via Samarqand he came direct to Kabul to study the scocial condition of the peoples in this region. He is a scholar in the department of

Sociology in the California University and he wanted a first hand knowledge of the social conditions in different countries. He is really bold because with this maimed leg, he ventured to cross all the way from America via Europe to Afghanistan. He told me that he would be going to Peshwar and to Delhi, then to Varanasi and Calcutta, would fly to Bangalore and then to Bangkok, Korea and Japan and finally straight to New York. I thank his courage. He lives in the room next to Mr. Gulji's in the Hotel Kabul. At about 10 0' clock, the American tourist came to my room. Mr. Donlin, Mr. Gulji and myself started for the museum.

Mr. Gulji was a strange man ; Mr. Donlin accosted him, "Now Mr. Gulji, you look a Canadian. Your dress looks more Canadian than a European." I could not understand the difference between Canadian and European fashions. Mr. Gulji said that his suit had arrived from Canada through the Point Four Organisation. Though the suit had been ordered about 6 months back, it arrived now. Thereafter it was washed, ironed and packed in a box. Mr. Gulji took with him a bottle. I could understand that it was *Shiraji* from the Persian embassy, the best wine from Shiraj in red colour.

His hairs were now dressed into long curls flowing over his neck, coming down to his shoulders. He was perfectly clean-shaved. His shoes were as polished as a mirror. He had two cameras with him and also two dozen film rolls.

On the way we had a long talk with Mr. Gulji. He began to tell me the story of his life. He was a student of Aligarh University before the Partition and passed his B. Sc. in Engineering as the Government of India scholar. But with the Partition, his scholarship was stopped and he was then a scholar of the Pakistan Government reading in the same University. He stood first there and then was appointed an Instructor and finally a Lecturer in Aligarh. Within six months he was appointed an architect to the Government of Pakistan. From there he was sent to Canada as an Adviser to a Pak-Government commercial mission. There he worked for 6 months and then his paintings attracted attention of his friends. His paintings were exhibited in three official exhibitions which brought him great fame and a large amount of money. He was offered a post by the Canadian Government, but he refused and went to London. There he arranged an exhibition of his paintings. For some reasons or other, the British Government

did not like him to stay in England and so he went to Denmark and Norway. There he arranged an exhibition of his paintings. After that he went to Paris and again he had an exhibition of his paintings and photography. He was flashed over television. In the end, he was called to Karachi to accept the post of an official photographer of Pakistan State on a salary of Rs. 1500/- per month.

But soon afterwards it was found that his religion was neither Sunni nor Shia. He was a Qadiani. Qadianis are a sect of Muslims who do not accept Muhammad as the last prophet. The founder of this sect is one Mirza Ghulam Muhammad Bashiruddin of Qadian.....So his position became very very uncomfortable. His father too, who was an engineer in Karachi, had trouble for his religion. He had two sisters and a brother. The wrath of the Sunni community even fell upon this innocent painter. By birth, he was a Peshwari, but by descent belonged to the tribal area outside Peshwar. As such, he was a Pakhtun. So, Mr. Gulji was a Pakhtun by race, a Peshwari by birth and a Qadiani by religion and now an Indian by nationality of birth and a Pakistani by transfer. He talks English so fine without the least American accent. His English is idiomatic and he can express his paintings

as if he sees his paintings before his eyes and the back-ground always flashes on his mind. Only one thing he would dislike most—interruption in his talk ; and he expects everybody to hear him talk and not question. By this time, we reached the outskirts of Hajari Najari.

Hajari Najari is a small factory on the way to the Kabul Museum. There was a police sentry at the gate of the factory. We entered the gate and within five minutes we got a permit which was procured by Mr. Gulji at so short a time. Mr. Gulji disclosed his secret that he is the royal painter to his Majesty, the King of Afghanistan. He said that while His Majesty Zahir Shah of Afghanistan, visited Karachi, he was appointed by the Government of Pakistan to draw the royal portrait of the Shah and it took him about three days to complete a portrait of the Shah. He was invited by the Shah to go to Kabul for drawing portrait of the Shah, his family, his ancestors and also the important personages of Afghanistan amongst natural surroundings of Afghanistan. As such, he has got an access to everything in Afghanistan. Further, he said that the Shah of Afghanistan had ordered him to make a picture of the Shah in *lapis lazuli* and in other stones that would match lapis

lazuli. The back ground of this picture would be a peacock in stones and it took Mr. Gulji about six months to make the colour combination of a peacock on a piece of paper. Then it was photographed in colours and now it is being set in stones for which the expenditure would be about fifty thousand dollars which is about two and a half lakhs in Indian rupees. So Mr. Gulji wanted us to see the progress of his picture on stones. Really it was a wonderful thing to see how this young artist is going to arrange for such a picture with the help of the illiterate workmen of Afghanistan. Only one stone-cutter has come from Germany to help him. The work is practically half-finished and it will be completed by the next birth-day of the king. So we were astonished to find how this young man with varied experience of an engineer, designer, photographer and artist has come all the way from Pakistan to draw the painting of the kind. He is now organising the exhibition of his paintings—Gulji Paintings in Afghanistan. He promised to give us the details of his paintings in Afghanistan where he is for the last two years to draw the portraits in pencil. He drew the portraits of some great personalities of Afghanistan including ministers and ambassadors of U.S.A. and Pakistan.

We hurried through our programme in Hajari Najari within an hour though I would like to stay there for an hour more. But it was necessary to go to the museum to revisit the collections.

My second visit to the museum of Kabul was more helpful to me because Mr. Gulji, who was with us, explained to me the wall-paintings and he said that though the Afghans were not genius in the art of painting, yet some modern painters in Afghanistan deserved more eloquent appreciation than what they have been given before. Mr. Gulji said that Afghanistan is a place where people would not like to go because there is barely any propaganda to attract people from outside. But in fact those who visit Afghanistan and her unsophisticated people would be more charmed by what they have seen of the land in its natural environments.

We entered the Museum at about 11-45 A. M. I took a photograph of the great bowl which was placed in front of the museum. This bowl had been taken from Qandahar as has already been noted. It was carved out of stone by muslim stone-cutters in the fifteenth century A. D. This bowl had been transferred from India from a Buddhist temple and was utilised as a reservoir

for water in front of a mosque. The water of the bowl was used for ablution of the intending prayer-sayers. This time, I went to the room where articles from Nuristan, formerly called Kafristan, on the south-east of the Hindu Kush, were collected. These statues were made of wood collected from the tombs and burial grounds of the ancient Hindus. Kafristan means the land of the Kafiris. But as the name has an unpleasant association with the word—*Kafir*, they renamed Kafristan as Nuristan which means the Land of Light. It was Kafristan which was the abode of the ancient Hindus and Buddhists, who had a big colony there. The wooden statues were like those which the Hindus made on the eve of the *Sraddh* ceremony of their dead ancestors. The wooden image represented the men who had been burnt to ashes or who had been buried under the earth. In Syria and Lebanon and also in the museum of Jerusalem, I have seen, on the tombs of the remains, statues carved out in white marbles exactly representing the body that lay inside the coffins. There were some statues which looked like “fleshy carvings” that we generally find in Puri or Bhubaneshwar temples in India. I do not know if there is any connection between the two but the carvings look almost the same.

In one room the collections of Fundakistan near Ghorband at the foot of the Hindu Kush (west) were deposited and they resembled the Indian art and architectures of the Gupta period. There are some statues of clay and some mural paintings. They have been collected from a temple that stood on a small valley south of Siah Gherd (black spot). I have taken down copious notes on this art treasures and deposits. It will be a long time before their full significance shall be ascertained. The Museum has been divided into several rooms in which collections from different times have been stored and displayed. Of them the most important are the Bamian room and Bagram room.

Bamian is to the north-west of Kabul, 200 miles away, lying between snow-clad mountain ranges of Hindu Kush and Kohi-Baba. Here was the tallest statue of Buddha, 171 ft. high. The painted cave has been cleared and cleansed. What a wonderful painting on the wall of the cave uncovered from Kakrak representing a Buddha and a Bodhiswatta. There is also a painting symbolising the conversation of Buddha with a hunter king who ultimately adopted Buddhism and non-violence and gave up his profession of killing. On the ceiling of the cave where the Buddha image,

fifty three feet high, is chambered there are paintings 2000 years old depicting girl musicians with Indian string instruments. The paintings and images reminded me of the paintings and carvings at the cave temples of Ajanta and Elora and on the walls of Sarnath and Benares.

One Bamian-Buddha statue in prayerful mood was taken out from Kakrak to Kabul Museum.

Three-headed Buddha, eight feet high, found in Kakrak is now in Kabul Museum.

The features of the images—forehead Mongol type, nose and chin are Aryan ; eyes look like those of a dreamy Indian lady, as if cut like the petals of a flower. The image below has a Mongol face, Indian veil, oval chin.

The portrait of the feast ceremony on the wall of a cave in Bamian is wonderful. Bodhiswatta is enjoying a feast with three plates in hand. The eyes symbolise an ethereal atmosphere where body has no appeal.

The collection from Bamian is interesting, rather too interesting for a student of Indo-Afghan cultural history which even a casual visitor cannot afford to forget.

In the evening at 5 0' clock, I delivered my first lecture in the hall of the University Law College.



Indian Musicians playing on lute—painted on the ceiling
of the Bamian temple in Afghanistan.

Our first Secretary of the Embassy, and almost all the high personages of Kabul were present, specially the teachers of the University. The hall was packed to suffocation and there was a large number of students who had gathered there to hear the lecture by the Indian professor. My subject of lecture was "The Contribution of the Afghan Hegemony to the Medieval Indian History and Culture.' *

Generally, Afghanistan has a black association with blood-shed, murder and tyranny. European historians have given a very dark picture of the Afghan rulers and painted the Afghan heroes as enemies to human civilisation and culture. Whatever may be the nature of their rule, they saved India from the Mongol terror. If the Mongols had come to India, certainly the Indian civilisation would have been practically wiped out at least in the northern India. Any way, I spoke for about 55 minutes and a copy of my speech already printed in Persian had been distributed amongst the people present there and there was a dicussion after my speech was over and I had to answer all sorts of questions. Many of the

* The lecture in full is printed in appendix.

university teachers present were really astonished to find me so enthusiastic about the Afghans for whom they had no kind words from the historians of the West. Mr. Gulji was present during my lecture and he told me that I had made a very sympathetic approach to the problem of Afghanistan.

Professor Muhammad Ali who was present was so much charmed with my lecture that he agreed to assist me in preparing my book, *the Legacy of Afghanistan*. He invited me to tea along with Mr. Prem Sankar of our embassy. This Muhammad Ali was a friend of Prof. Abdur Rashid of Aligarh and they worked together on the tribes of Afghanistan. He also asked me to write to Prof. Habib for an article. I told him that I hoped to meet them personally. Prof. Muhammad Ali asked me how I liked Afghanistan. My answer was a very simple one. "I have admiration for Iran and I have love for Afghanistan. Afghanistan's people are not yet sophisticated and you can mix with them and talk to them heart to heart and they do not generally cherish any ulterior motive about you. The Iranians, on the other hand, are very suspicious. Of course, that is natural because they had been cheated several times by the Arabs, Turks,

English and Russians." Prof. Muhammad Ali nodded his head and he told me that I should be more cautious about my remarks about Iran because there were many Iranians present in that hall. I laughed and told him that I was a mere student of Islamic Culture and not a politician.

At night I visited Mr. Gulji's exhibition and learnt that almost all the pictures and sketches that were hung up on the wall had been sold out for a minimum of five dollars and a maximum of 500 dollars per piece. The auditorium of exhibition as claimed by U. S. A was built up by the American Embassy as a gesture of goodwill to Pakistan and it was filled up with the portraits of His Majesty, the king of Afghanistan, the Prime Minister, the Education Minister and the Commerce Minister etc. One of the portraits also depicted the Pakistani Ambassador. The American Ambassador's portrait was the largest after the king's. The whole show looked as if it was a mutual admiration society. The portraits drawn by Mr. Gulji were really 'A' class. The portraits drawn of the living persons were somewhat flattering to those who have been portrayed. But a critic would say that it is better that they have not been exhibited at all except that of the king, who stands

on a different level. One of the pictures of *Buz Koshi* i. e. a competition for killing a *buz* (a goat) is wonderful and has a history of its own. Here is the story of Buz Koshi.

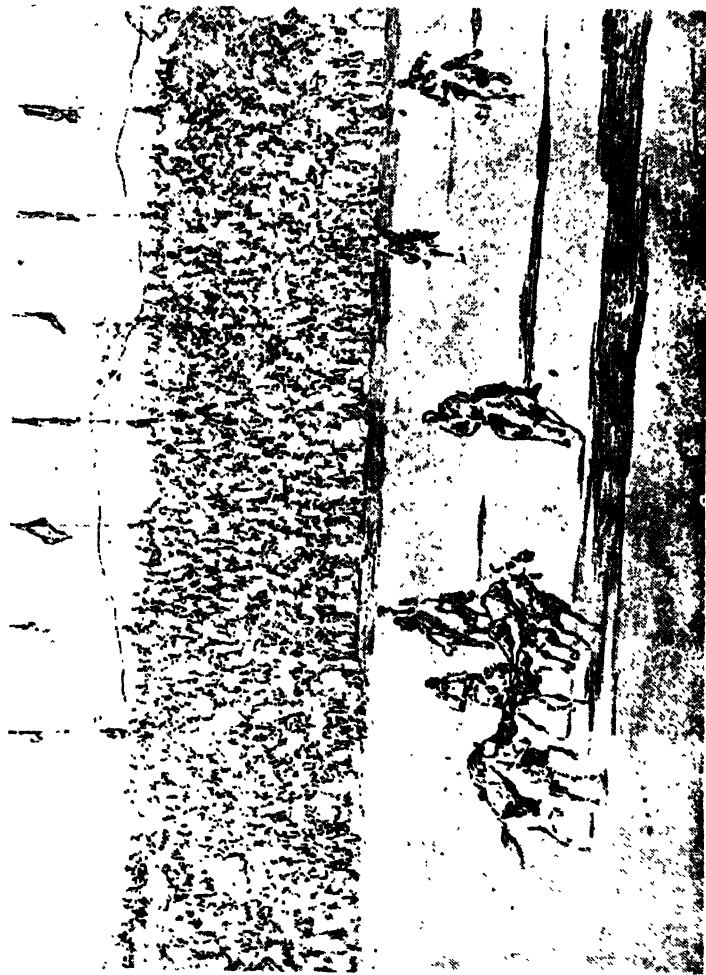
Buz Koshi : It is a national game of the Afghans. This sport is quite Afghan-like, full of thrill, of skill, of ferocity and of horse-manship.

The name is suggestive. *Buz* means a goat, *Koshi* means snatching. The words together signify snatching a goat. The goat is now replaced by a calf. It means a contest for a goat or a calf.

The occasion is the King's birth-day ; the contest is a feature of the celebration of King's sacred birth-day on the 15th October. So it is autumn. The weather is not yet too cold. The snow is on the top of the mountain and is yet too distant. Winter is not come ; but it is just coming. The background is refreshing.

Of course, on occasions of some happy family events such as birth of a son, marriage of a daughter, or on stray occasions according to the pleasure of big Amirs, Buz Koshi game is played. It is an occasion for a joyous festivity.

Origin of the game : No one knows when this game was first started. Tradition tells that in the 13th century, around the time of Chengiz



Gulji's painting- The Buz-Koshi — (Goat Killing Game)

Khan's invasion, captives in war were flung on the field in front of the tribesmen and then snatched away by the horsemen. Now instead of the human captive it is the unfortunate goat or calf.

The Field of Game : Buz Koshi is played on a vast open field sometimes stretching over several miles, generally overlooking a ridge of a mountain wherefrom vast number of spectators can have a full view of the game. The ground is often hard ; stones and gravels abound,—risky for the horse. A shallow pit is dug within the field, marked by a circle at the far end of the field. A carcass of a goat or a calf is placed inside the pit. This carcass is the apple of contest for the players.

Two teams, pre-selected, stand encircling the field, all attentive and ready for the contest. To be selected as a member of the Buz Koshi team is a great honour for any Afghan.

The play : As soon as the drum is sounded, the players rush out and charge with great speed and agility to reach the calf. The horses are trained ; they are sometimes more agile than their riders ; the horses quickly bend their forelegs for the riders to grab the calf or goat ; the riders have special uniforms or colours. They

wear cotton caps, short cloaks and long boots with high heels which help the player to remain steady on the saddle. On the day before the contest the competitors in their gorgeous uniform and beautifully caprisoned horses start parading through the streets of the city—a sight reminding the historians of glorious and impressive processions of the knights in the medieval age. Before the actual contest begins, the officials and the horsemen line up to pay homage to His Majesty. His Majesty takes their salutes.

The play : Once the rider has taken hold of the calf, he at once dashes out and attempts to take a full circuit of the field of play ; his real point is to fling back the carcass into the pit wherefrom he picked it up. His opponents try to snatch the calf from him and the men of his party try to thwart his opponents. In attempting to reach the goal many are wounded, both the rider and the horse.

No competitor can pull off the opponent's cloak or thwart him with his whip ; if he does, he is put on the list of the disqualified and is out of play. There are umpires on four sides.

Thus the game continues—sometimes continues for the whole day till the sunset. The calf passes several hands several times. Like a volley ball, the

calf passes on and on till one of the players delivers the calf back to the pit wherefrom it was picked up. He is hailed as the hero of the day. He is presented to His Majesty and His Majesty presents him a special prize. His team is honoured with the Buz Koshi banner for the year.

The horse : A word about the horses of the play. The Buz Koshi horses are of selected breed ; they are trained and groomed.

Almost every Buz Koshi player has his own horse. From March to September, during the hot months of the year, the horses are given rest and trained inside a fenced enclosure. Their food is simple—little grass, more barley, or barley mixed with butter and eggs. During the hottest months they are fed on melons (*Hindswi*—Indian melons). In the early morning they are put to walking exercise or they run in open fields to keep their body fit.

A Buz Koshi horse is not less cared for than the son of the rider.

People come from distant parts to witness this Buz Koshi game. The Turks, Mongols, Uzbeks and tribesmen from Peshwar to Hirat in their national costume come to enjoy the game. Foreigners also come to enjoy the game played.

Mr. Gulji, the painter was present in the last ceremony of Buz Koshi outside Kabul and he has drawn a picture of this Buz Koshi in lines. It is one of his best productions, so life-like, so real and so communicative. Mr. Gulji exhibited 250 pieces of portraits and some were in lines and some were in colours. Of all these paintings and colours, the symbolic creation of the earth and the coloured picture of the universe were his best productions. The inter-play of colours through lights gave fresh charm for the visitors who came to see the exhibition at night.

Mr. Gulji used to explain to his visitors the background of these pictures, the scheme of colours and the vision produced by these pictures and portraits. Many would not be able to know that the man who was explaining the significance of the pictures was the painter himself. Mr. Gulji looked as if he was passing through a dream and he felt every word that he spoke. He felt inspired by his own words. These words came from the inner depth of his feeling. Some people who took him to be an agent of Mr. Gulji wanted to have the personal acquaintance with the painter. To very few people he divulged that he was the painter. If he did this, he was afraid that he would

be flooded with invitations. So he chose not to reveal his identity.

I told him that he must thank the Americans who had given him such publicity without any fees from him. He laughed and said, "Well, Professor, you do not know that the Americans are spending only three thousand dollars for this exhibition. But the entrance fee they have raised is not negligible and the balance they will make up by deducting a portion of the sale proceeds of pictures. My pictures have already been sold for 14 thousand dollars. It will certainly cover the expenses of exhibition incurred by the Americans." He then presented to me a copy of the lecture delivered by the Ambassador of U. S. A. in Afghanistan on the opening day. In this lecture, delivered by the American Ambassador, there was a sense of patronising the painter expressed in such a subtle yet blunt way that no self-respecting painter would tolerate it. The Pakistan Ambassador who was present there, congratulated Mr. Gulji that he had been so much appreciated by the American Ambassador. He added, it would create a good feeling between U. S. A. and Pakistan. Mr. Gulji told me that the exhibition was a political affair and not an exhibition for the purpose of giving

encouragement to a young painter and that it would be new link between Pakistan and U. S. A. on the politico-cultural background.

Mr. Gulji invited me to dinner along with the two daughters of the Pakistan Ambassador. These two ladies looked peculiar, to say the least. Their dress, their way of talk and menu of the dinner sufficiently demonstrated that they were not the real inheritors of the tradition of Islam. Even in Afghanistan I was sorry to notice that Afghans coming from outside could drink and did drink a lot. In Iran almost everybody drinks. But those Afghans, who drink, can compete with the Iranians. However, drinks are not as common in Kabul as in Teheran. In a city like Siraj, wine flows in profusion but in Azarbizan and Khorasan wine is taken but not in public. 'Wine of Siraj has always precedence over the precepts of the Quran' was not said in vain. Anyway, I have no connection with liquor and so I cannot say why drinking is popular in the modern muslim countries ; but it was popular certainly.

At 9 O'clock in the night after coming back from my dinner, I found Mrs. Irlinger and her son waiting for me in the reception room of the Hotel Kabul. I was astonished to find that she was waiting for me at

such an unusual hour of the night. She told me that she had no time in the morning, or in the evening, or at night except at this unusual hour. I offered her and her son cups of tea and some fruits which were in my room, but she at once drew out from her handbag some pieces of cakes made by her in her own kitchen. She said that she had not found a guest of my type in Kabul and she asked me to appreciate the German method of cooking and confectionery. Incidentally she began to give her impressions on different types of people with whom she had come in touch during the critical days of the last World War. She said that the French could be easily won. The Americans were still more easily won and more easily lost because they would not continue friendship unless they find some profit in it. The English people are typically reserve. They would not make a friend, but if they make a friend they would generally stick to him or her. The Germans during the time of Herr Hitler became very self-conscious. In spite of their defeat in the last war, the Germans feel that, they would come back to their own position again. To-day the Germans are refugees,—if you like to call them refugees, because they come from the East to the West and from the West to the East of the same country. They are

exerting themselves for a come-back to their former position. One part is a frontier to the other. They both speak the common language, eat the common type of food and feel pride in the common heritage. She told me that the people of Pakistan are in habit of villifying the Indians (by Indians she meant *Hindus*) but not the Muslims who live in India. The Pakistanis know that whenever any occasion will arise, the Indian Muslims will side with the Pakistani Muslims. She had been to Peshwar and Lahore recently and she told that even to-day Pakistan, to a considerable extent, is dominated by the White Skin—whether they are Germans, French, Britons, or Americans. “The sense of inferiority is still in them. They have not yet been able to shake off their dependance on White Men”. About the Hindus, she said, “I would not like to tell you much about them because you are yourself a Hindu.”

She found that I did not appreciate this type of remark from her. She understood that from lines of my forehead. She assured me that she would tell her mind about the Hindus next day when I go to take tea with her. Just behind me I found a Pakistani Muslim standing. This German lady was indeed wise. I could understand why she was not going to give her mind about a Hindu before a Pakistani.

8th June :

Very early in the morning, I went out in the street to have a view of the historic city of Kabul. I started walking along the side of the River Kabul that flows through the heart of the city with its tributary called the *Logar* just on the south-east corner of the city. Last night I had an occasion to read about the ancient site and name of Kabul and the Buddhist remnants in the city of Kabul. There is mention of *Coobha* (Kabul river) in the Rig Veda. In the Avesta, Kabul has been mentioned as *Wikrata* which was one of the sixteen Aryan Settlements. Greek Historian Ptolemy has mentioned *Karora* or *Kaboora* which has been identified with Kabul. I was interested to see the symbolic wheel of Buddha called *Chakra* or *Chakri*. It is about a mile and a half from the centre of the modern city of Kabul and there were some remnants of statues of the Buddhist period two or three centuries after Christ. They are very well preserved now on the ridge of the mountain about 20 kilometer high. There is a monument of Hussain to the south east of the park and there is another monument called Sork Minar—but the structure of the minaret, definitely proves that it was a Buddhist work. To the east of the city, I again visited the citadel

called Bala Hissar which was so famous in Indian History connected with the Afghan war of 1879.

The city of Kabul is surrounded by mountain ranges and there are three entrances into the city. Most important of them are the Sher Darwaja and Asmai Range (meaning a temple of Moon ; Asmi or *Soma* = Moon). The gates were opened in the 5th century A. D. during the Ephthalite rule over Kābul and Zabul, to maintain communication with the outside in case of a defensive war. Some remnants still testify to the ancient heritage of the city.

On the western out-skirts of Sher Darwaja there stands the famous garden of Babur. It was possibly the site of royal burial. There is no reason why Babur should choose this garden for his burial unless there is some old precedence. Babur himself, a poet and a lover of nature, might have naturally liked to be buried on the banks of the river in the midst of the trees 'where bulbuls might sing', or it may be that he so much disliked Indian climate, its weather, sands, dusts and its terrible summer that he might be longing for his associations of his childhood and youth in Central Asia ; the mountain regions might have prompted him to seek a resort in the cool atmosphere of Kabul

after his death. For reasons political, Babur had transferred his capital from Kabul to Delhi and finally to find the permanent capital of the Mughals in India. If Babur liked, he could have ruled India from Kabul but he preferred to stay in India during his life time because of political necessity. Yet on his death he wanted to be buried in his favourite garden on the bank of the river Kabul. Even now an annual festival is celebrated in spring in Kabul inside the Garden of Babur.

Close to the Hotel Kabul, I again visited the Bustan Sarai or the Garden of Amir Abdur Rahman. It is in its original form for the last three hundred years.

In the eastern suburb of the city there stands a tomb of Nadir Shah, the father of the present king. This tomb is built in marble in an imposing style, overlooking all round.

By 8 0' clock I returned to my hotel and found that Mr. Gulji with Mr. Donlin of California were preparing to go out for a visit of Babur's tomb. I was invited by Mr. Gulji to visit the tomb of Babur though I had visited it already. Mr. Gulji had with him his exceptionally good camera costing about 500 dollars i. e. Rs. 2500/- approximately. There in the tomb of Babur

I took photograph of Babur's tomb from three sides and also two photographs of the tomb of Mirza Hindal and Mirza Hakim, as also of the daughter of Mirza Hindal whose bodies lie buried in the corner of the tomb of Babur. The creepers that had grown over the tomb of Babur reminded me of the pious wish of Babur before his death that 'Bulbul should sing eternally and the murmurs of the River Kabul should sing his lullaby'. But unfortunately the river had receded about a mile away from the tomb and the Bulbuls no more sing ; you hear the stone-cutters hammering the stones. Mr. Gulji and Mr. Donlin took about 20 exposures and I have these pictures with myself. Mr. Gulji was a very expert photographer and he gave me the privilege of using his camera. I took snaps with Gulji's camera. They were very excellent, not because I was a good photographer but because the camera was excellent. But Mr. Donlin did not like to exhaust his films, nor did he offer me to use his camera ; yet he was an American.

In the Rest House near the tomb, there were two trees, very old, spreading shades all around. There were facilities for the visitors to stay and to have tea throughout the day ; it was closed at night. We enjoyed a cup of tea there sitting on

the western balcony of the Rest House overlooking the Garden of Babur and just a little further west, is the river Kabul. We went up the stairs and had a view of the whole city of Kabul including the Garden of Babur below our feet and also the ever-flowing river Kabul, though the flow of the stream was no more. It was an apology for river in the summer, but still it has a fascination for its historic associations.

It is said that the big tree to the east of the Rest House, was brought by Babur's attendants from India with a view to give him shade in his eternal sleep. The gardener (*Baghban*) told us many fantastic stories about these trees. He narrated that there were two white Cobras there inside a hollow of the tree. If they come out of the tree and play in the open, it will be a good augury for Afghanistan and the Afghans will win a war. What he said happened exactly on the eve of the expedition of Akbar Khan against the British and of Nadir Shah against Baccha-i-Shako. He said that since the demise of Nadir Shah, these snakes have not been seen even for a day. We took about an hour to visit the Garden ; the Garden was no longer a planned one, nor was it kept well.

At about 10-30 A. M. I went to the Indian

Embassy. I was invited to go to Jalalabad with Mr. Ohri next morning. His new car was waiting at Peshwar for delivery. The car had come from America by sea to Karachi; from Karachi by land it came to Peshwar and Mr. Ohri would take delivery of his car at Peshwar and then it would re-cross the Khyber Pass and reach Jalalabad and finally Kabul. I could not miss this opportunity of visiting Khyber Pass and also the tribal territories of Momnad and other ferocious tribes. But I was told that I could not go to Jalalabad or Ghazni from Kabul unless I had a permit from the Police. It was very difficult to get a permit even for a visitor in transit in Kabul. I had already heard that Dr. J.P. Singh had to wait for two months for a permit to visit the tribal regions. I phoned to the Vice-Chancellor of the Kabul University requesting him to make arrangements for a permit for visiting Jalalabad, Ghazni, Bamian and Hirat. The Vice-Chancellor was very kind to send a message to the Police Office. He asked an officer from the University to take my passport and a certificate from our Embassy. But the difficulty was that I did not get my registration from the police, because I did not think it necessary to get one as I was an official guest of the University of Kabul. I was rather happy

that the formality of having a registration or a permit of residence from the Police, as I had in Teheran, was avoided. But the moment the Vice Chancellor telephoned to the Police for granting me a permit, the police replied that no such man under the name of Dr. M. L. Roy Chowdhury of Indian nationality had been registered with the police ; as such the question of transit, visa or permit did not arise. So I took the help of Mr. Bodhraj who was an assistant in our Embassy. I took my passport and had myself registered immediately on the strength of a special request from the Vice Chancellor,—which was rather unusual.

After getting through the formalities with the help of Mr. Bodhraj, I came to the market for purchasing gold button for my shirt. Incidentally my intention was to be acquainted with the Indians of the Kabul Bazar. The Hindustanis or Sikhs who occupy very prominent place in the local economy of Kabul seemed happy. There were about six thousand Indians who have been naturalised as Afghans and they have got Afghan nationality. There are about three hundred floating Indians in Kabul who do business

I met one Indian Hindu merchant who had been driven away from the Punjab after the Partition of

1947. He told me that the naturalised Indian Afghans would not tell me the difficulties they are experiencing. He told me that he could tell some of them, namely, the Indian children have no opportunity of education there, because they do not get free tuition like other Afghan children. They are not given any appointment in the State ; the Hindu merchants are taxed though not to a heavy extent. Through backdoor the police and other officers squeeze money from the Indian merchants. The custom duties are higher on the Indians compared to those on the Afghan Muslims. An Indian witness in a court of law is *prima-facie* at a discount against the Muslim witness. Formerly the non-Muslim Indians in Kabul had to wear a dress of particular type to distinguish them from Afghans. Of course, this distinction in dress was eliminated later on. The non-Muslim Indians whether they are naturalised or not, are allowed to carry on trade. Generally the Indians trade in cloth and tea, and also in motor parts. The difficulty in trade is that communication between India and Afghanistan is under many non-official restrictions. Trade has become impossible now unless through Iran or through Pakistan by land. Pakistan has blocked the road from Peshwar to Jalalabad through the

Khyber Pass at Torkham. So, Afghan trade overland is practically in danger of being throttled because the communication by sea or land depends on the mercy or whims of the Pakistani and Iranian officers. After the Baghdad Pact, the members being Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey with the backing of America and England, Afghanistan is in danger of being bottlenecked. So, in order to avoid contact with Pakistan and with Iran, they have taken help from Russia. They are carrying on trade through air. That is why the Afghans have agreed to extension of the Qandahar Airport with the American help much to the dislike of the Russians. Russia has connected Kabul through six roads from the frontier of Samarquand, Bokhara and Hirat. The Russians come through the mountain Pass called Panch Shir which ends with the river Kabul just about 20 miles from Jalalabad. This Panch Shir mountain has become a very important strategical point for the Russians. They have built a dam to regulate water from the mountains of Hindukush coming to the river Kabul and finally discharging into the Indus.

I heard from this Indian merchant many more interesting details about the international situation round about Kabul. Indians, though they keep

rather silent, read newspapers and hear many things. They see many more things than meet their eyes. They have peculiar way of getting the correct news. They add 5 and 7, make it 13, then they subtract 1 and they get the correct result ($5+7=13-1$). The business man has got his own practical sense.

Mr. Gulji and myself were invited by Mr. Donlin, the Californian tourist to lunch at the International Club. I heard in Iran that the International Club in Kabul is for foreigners. But it was open only to the members of the Club and no one is allowed to stay there unless he is a member, nor to dine there unless he is introduced by a member of the Club. From Teheran I wrote to them asking for accomodation to be reserved ; but they had not the courtesy to reply, far less to reserve the seat for me. I was told now by the Manager of the Club that they had received my letter, but because it was not a letter from a member of the Club, they had not replied to it. This answer did not satisfy me. I now found the reason why they did not like to reserve a seat for an Indian ; at least they should have sent a reply—yes or no.

Exactly at about 2 P. M. we reached the International Club. It was about 3 miles from the centre

of Kabul and it was closed from all sides by walls of creepers. The road leading to the Club from the street was strewn with white marble chips. No car was allowed to enter into the premises of the Club. Just on the south of the Club building, there is a pool which had white tiles at the bottom with blue tiles on sides matching the open sky overhead. Around the bank of the pool there was a rectangular garden where only roses blossom and these roses were reflecting on the silvery water of the swimming pool. I found a large number of ladies, gents, boys and girls taking their bath. It was the month of June when Kabul was pretty hot. So there was a rush of swimmers there and for an hour of swimming they had to pay one hundred Afghanis, i.e. about ten rupees. In Jerusalem, I had already seen swimming pools like this, but those were covered on the top and it was, of course, winter when I was in Jerusalem. The water was artificially made warm by constant supply of steam and water from outside. At Kabul the water was pretty cold not artificially but naturally. At 2-30 P.M. we entered into the dining room.

I found Mr. Donlin exchanging the club tickets for lunch because every member has to advance one hundred dollars to cover his monthly charges and

at the end of the month this deposit is to be reimbursed after deducting the charges. Mr. Donlin exchanged two lunch tickets for Mr. Gulji and for me which cost him six dollars.

The food was purely European and there was no touch of Afghan food except a dish of *Chelo Kabab* which, too, was Iranian. There were cutlets. I took them to be fowl cutlets but they were too soft. Actually at first I could not believe that fowl cutlet was so soft. I asked Mr. Gulji what it was. He said that it was frog cutlet. Fish was also served. The fish coming from the Caspian Sea was a delicacy for the Russians. I also tasted it in the ambassadorial dinner in Iran as also in the house of Reja Alvi of the Boulavard, Teheran. I found that the American waiter there was just a little partial to Mr. Donlin who was an American. Though I was a guest of this American, still I felt that the chief waiter of the hotel who was an American was too kind to Mr. Donlin. Mr. Gulji taunted Mr. Donlin, "the Americans feel a kind of superiority all over the Middle East. You can understand an Englishman being always reserved ; you can understand a German being taciturn ; you can understand a Frenchman being frolicsome and you can

understand a Russian feeling his physical strength superior to that of others. But the Americans had not yet developed the real technique of mixing in good societies." Mr. Gulji's expression was jocosely clear.

We finished our lunch by 3-30 P.M. Mr. Gulji and myself came back from the International Club to the American Embassy where Mr. Gulji would be re-arranging his pictures and portraits for the exhibition. We reached the American Embassy by 4 P.M. On the way, Mr. Gulji repeated that the Americans had utilised him as a source of propaganda to advertise their sympathy for Pakistan. The news catered by the American Agency to Pakistan had not been sent to America, because America did not need this propaganda whereas Pakistan needed it. Mr. Gulji wanted that his exhibition of pictures and portraits should be given publicity in America ; but there was no word about this exhibition in the American papers ; whereas Pakistan had broadcast this exhibition and that the Americans were giving facilities for exhibition of art and paintings of a young Pakistani Artist. Mr. Gulji, though young and sentimental, had his own way of feeling, thinking and expressing. I liked this boy because he had many qualities of head and heart. But he was spoiling himself as he

was always drinking and drinking. His bill for drinks is about one hundred dollars a month. I came back to the hotel alone at about 6 0' clock and found a letter waiting for me from Mr. Ohri, the First Secretary to the Indian Embassy, saying that he was going to Jalalabad next day and would come to pick me up at 5 0' clock in the morning. So I was very happy that I would be able to visit the Khyber Pass, Jalalabad and Torkham just on the frontier of Pakistan.

9th June, '59

Just at 5 A.M. Mr. Ohri, Mrs. Ohri and their son arrived at the door of the Hotel Kabul to pick me up on their way to Jalalabad. Before the sun had risen in the east, we just took the road to Jalalabad. On the way we crossed Bala Hisar and within ten minutes we were out of the city. A spacious road was being built by the U. S. S. R. ; it was not yet completed. On the otherside of the city, there was the road constructed by U.S.A., as if there was a competition between the two great powers of the world for making headway into the heart of Afghanistan. On the two sides of the road there were still deposits of stone chips which were yet to be laid, rolled and mortered. There were vast fields on both sides, which were not yet

cultivated because it was not the season. Just in front of us there was a mountain ridge called Bonle Kazi. Along the road, there was the Kabul River which was gradually growing wider and wider, deeper and deeper. Soon the Kabul River became ferocious though its width was not commensurate with its ferocity. We motored about fifteen miles when we found a road coming from the other side of the mountain just terminating on the bank of the Kabul River. From a distance I found five peaks of equal size—one after the other—as if they have been constructed by some engineer in equal proportions ; height and the distance between any two of them looked the same. They are called *Panch Sir* i.e. five peaks. The very word Panch Sir reminded me that here was possibly some Indian touch. The name Panch is Indian 'five' and Sir is 'head' in Indian language. These five peaks are the different manifestations of the mountain Hindukush. The Hindukush was not very far ; it had come from the border of Persia, and become the dividing line between Iran and Hindusthan. I could guess the importance of the Hindukush as a dividing line between Iran and Hindusthan. This was the mountain where the Hindus had been killed in large numbers or the Hindus had killed

the enemy in large numbers. It is told that after the separation of the Indo-Iranians, there was no love between the two groups. The more energetic and powerful group which crossed the Indus and settled in India, often poured forth into Iran. They used to swoop upon Iran for plunder, or for adventure. The Hindukush reminded that there was a killing episode near the region.

The word *Hind* is not really a Sanskrit word. In Persian, *Hind* means robber. In Sanskrit the root meaning is *Hinosti Dushoyati* i.e. they envy—they give false accusation. The Persian word means *Hind Bamane Rahajan me iyad* i.e. *Hind*, by meaning, is one who commits robbery in broad daylight. In the *Sabda Druma*, the Sanskrit dictionary, the meaning is *Hindu Paraswaapa Hari dashyu*. There is no word *Hindu* in the old Sanskrit grammar or dictionary. It is not found till the 10th century A. D. when it was written in *Siva Samhita* that *Kulau Bhabiswati Hindu-Dharma proloptara JABANA* that is, in the Kali Age there would be a *Jabana* who would destroy the Hindu religion.

Hindukush is a great name to the Indians. So I was very much interested to pursue the course of

Hindukush, and heard many stories about this mountain, as our car proceeded.

We reached *Sirohi Bund* which has been constructed by the Russian engineers to control the waters coming out of the Hindukush through the five peaks of Panch Sir. Here there is a hydro-electric station and the Russians claim that they can control the water of the Kabul River which has its origin in Panchsir. It was vital for Pakistan to make a propaganda against India that the Indians were planning to control the water of the Indus by controlling the Sutlej, but it is these Russians too who can curtail the supply of water to Pakistan, if they so like, by controlling the Kabul river which feeds the Indus.

We got down at Sirohi Bund and had a stroll along the bridge connecting the two banks of the river Kabul. It was a very pleasant sight for the eye to enjoy and a very pleasant atmosphere to breathe. A vast expanse lay before us in the east and a ridge of mountain to the west, and the sweet murmurs of the romantic River Kabul discharging all her waters with great velocity down the bund, made a very beautiful combination. We had a cup of tea in the rest house on the other side of the Sirohi Bund. Though the tea was not good, yet we

liked it very much because it was followed by some sweet preparation which Mrs. Ohri had brought for us. We started from Sirohi at about 8-30 and within 15 to 20 minutes we found that the atmosphere was becoming very hot, hotter and hottest. The usual temperature of Jalalabad in the summer is 120 to 128 degrees. By 10-30 we reached Jalalabad where the Consul was waiting for us at the door of his Consulate. He greeted us with a smile and I was introduced by Mr. Ohri to Mr. Kasyap, our Consul. He told me at once that I was to come to Kabul via Jalalabad in the month of March last when the airport at Qandahar was closed for snow and air-ship of Ariana would stop only at Jalalabad Airport. He already got the information from the Indian Embassy at Kabul that I expected to land at Jalalabad failing Qandahar. But now we have met, he said—"Better late than never and I was waiting for you so long."

The temperature at that time was 108 at about 11 o'clock. Coming from Teheran which was so cold, Jalalabad was a trial for me. Though I had a spell of Qandahar heat on the first of June, on my way to Kabul, I cannot compare the heat of Qandahar with the heat of Jalalabad because at

Qandahar I was very sick and at Jalalabad I was quite hale and hearty.

Mr. Kasyap and Mrs. Kasyap were all attention to us. They are vegetarians and we had our food by 12-30 P. M. We must reach Jalalabad before 4 o'clock because I had to come back to Jalalabad from Torkham where the Afghan territory ends and Pakistan territory begins in the mountain pass of Khyber. Mrs. Kasyap told me not to go to Torkham because it would be terribly hot and at the same time it would be more difficult for me to come back before dusk. Mr. Kasyap said, "Professor, you must go there, otherwise the journey to Afghanistan would only be fruitless. You must pass through the beautiful mountains, enjoy the freedom of the sky and incidentally see the life of the tribal people whom you may be fortunate to meet on the way. Further, if you come back after the dusk, you will be able to stay here for the whole night. We shall then discuss all about the land and peoples here. I will give you an account of the Pakhtuns and their attitude towards the Indians." Mr. Kasyap was a man, Mrs. was but a woman ; both were good yet different.

So I accepted the advice of Mr. Kasyap and agreed to take the risk of going to Torkham and

returning by the sun down and see for myself the glory of the mountains and enjoy the sights which I shall never have the opportunity to see.

After exchanging greetings we started for Torkham where Pakistan meets Afghanistan. Mr. Ohri will cross the frontier, go to Peshwar and have delivery of his car within three days and I shall go back to Kabul by the embassy car in which we came here.

At about 1-30 we were passing through Logman. This is exactly the place where Jaipal had been defeated by Subuktagin and there was a small colony of the Hindus left and they have been still living in Afghanistan for the last one thousand years. They have not changed their religion. Their names are Hindu and the title they use at the end of their names is Sangchin and not Singh. They speak Poshtu and Persian mixed. No trace of Hinduism is there except that they wear a small ring at the bottom of their ears. They do not burn their dead bodies but they bury. These Logmani Hindus are about three to four hundred families. They marry within their own community. Their profession is trade.

We had with us one Jat Sikh, named Bhagat Singh who would accompany Mr. Ohri to Peshwar.

He is attached to the Indian Consulate at Jalalabad. He knows almost every inch of land from Jalalabad to Peshwar. On the way he was telling us the local historical events connected with India. The city of Jalalabad is the city of Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar, the famous ruler of India who built it, though his grand-father Babur chose the site. Jai Bhagat Singh showed us the sites occupied by the British during the Afghan War, 1841-42. Sultan Habibullah was defeated by the British near Jalalabad and his tomb is there. It was the city of Kanishka and just a little further down we met the crossing of three roads and one of the roads crossed through the Sawat Valley where Alexander originally took the road to the land of Puru so famous in the Indian history of Alexandrian age. A little east, the Mughal relics were still there. From here the sites around were inhabited by tribes like Afridis, Momnado, Ghilzais etc. On the ridges of mountains on both sides, there were small vigil posts which were occupied by the frontier guards. These guards have binoculars, radio-transmitters and also machine-guns. They watch the movements of the enemy and they have got inter-connection between one post and another. We passed about 20 posts to the left and right of our road to

Torkham. These posts are maintained to prevent intrusion by the Pakistani tribes living around the Khyber Pass area.

Bhagat Sing told us popular tales of snakes. On the mountain to the left, a small track runs from the base to the summit which the local people say, is the symbol of the snake that guard the mountain. In fact, this mountain is almost impassable. So the track is symbolised as a snake.

I was so much interested because here in this valley of Sawat there was the reminiscence of Alexander's invasion, the Kushana art treasures ; the stories relating to Jaipal and Sabuktagin. I wished very much to meet some Hindus of Logman area. Bhagat Singh told me again that he knows a large number of those Logmani Hindus. He just pointed out to me that most of the Logmani Hindus were of his type with long beard, tanned faces, big turbans, and talking half Persian and half Poshtu and not a word in Urdu.

This Bhagat Singh was of great help to us because on our way to Torkham the machinery of our car had a breakdown and with the help of Bhagat Singh it took us about an hour to have the car in order, but that too only after the unexpected appearance of a bus running from Torkham to

Kabul. The motor driver of that automobile used his skill and experience to put the machine in order. Mr. Ohri offered the Afghan mechanic of the lorry ten Afghani but he refused saying that he would expect the same assistance from the driver of our car if he had a breakdown of his car on the roadside. Then he was quite satisfied to get a cigarette from Mr. Ohri and a very very cordial smile from Mrs. Ohri.

I was interested in the Pakhtun problem very much and so myself and Mr. Ohri had a very good and elaborate discussion with Bhagat Singh and thereby I tried to understand the mentality and outlook of the people living there—whether they like to remain in Afghanistan or go back to Pakistan. The tribal people are absolutely dead to the cultural approaches made by Pakistan or Afghanistan. If they built a road on the top of the mountain down to the valley, it would be resisted by the tribal people on the logic that good roads would make the tribal people rather soft because they get hard and strong after striking the stone chips that are strewn over the roads. The metalled roads according to them, are designed to take away the natural strength of the Afghans who can move from mountain to mountain bare-footed and from

valley to valley like a mountain deer. It would not be possible for any government to build roads around the mountains and forests for this reason. So, for facility to cover a distance of five to ten miles, they would not lose their strength of feet to cover one hundred miles on the hill tops, as metalled road makes them inefficient and inactive in life.

If a hospital is to be built there, the tribal people would always say that they have lost confidence in Allah. Life, birth and death, according to them, are decrees of Allah. So, if there is any physical trouble, they would depend on Allah and pray for the recovery and if any medicine is to be used, which they do seldom, it would be from the local sooth-sayers and Mollahs. So they would not take the help of any doctor, nor use any hospital nor medicine, because it would amount to disbelief in Allah or express lack of confidence in the dispensation of Allah. So, Pakhtuns or tribal people are resisting introduction of the elements of modern civilisation.

The Afghan Government as well as the Pakistan Government are trying their best to win over the tribal people by giving money to the leaders of the tribal sections just as the British used to do

previously. This process was also attempted by Aurangzeb in the late 17th century. Some of the tribal leaders are so clever that if the father would get money from the Pakistan Government, the son would get money from the Afghan Government. Both of them would assure tribal loyalty to the rival Governments. Bhagat Singh told us that he himself had met some of these Jirga leaders who made a joke of the foolishness of the rival Governments.

Pakistan Government is rather more resourceful and clever. The modern Pakistan is now not controlled by Sindhis or Punjabis or East Bengal Muslims. East Bengal Muslims are in majority in Pakistan but they have no decisive influence on the affairs of Pakistan because Karachi in Sind is the capital. The Punjabi Muslims have long experience with the Government of the country and they have a considerable influence on the upper strata of administration in Pakistan. They are also fairly well represented in the army but really the heart of Pakistan beats in Rawalpindi of Peshwar wherefrom come the leaders of the army. General Ayub Khan, the present dictator of Pakistan is a Pakhtun from Rawalpindi and he is intending to transfer the capital from Karachi to Rawalpindi near Peshwar.

This means he will kill three birds by one shot. Rawalpindi, the proposed capital of Pakistan will be farthest from Dacca, the capital of East Pakistan. Karachi will lose all its importance except as a port. Lahore, which was the royal city of Pakistan, will lose its importance because just a hundred miles from Lahore, there will be the heart of Pakistan. The tribal people of Pakhtunistan will be very happy to see their city growing in importance and stature ; and to win over the Pakhtuns Rawalpindi will be a very great factor and a bait. I found that the Pakhtuns feel more kinship with Afghanistan because of their race, religion, ways of life and their certain matrimonial ties with the tribal people of Afghanistan and with many of the tribes of modern Afghanistan belonging originally to the tribes of Pakhtunistan.

By 4 o'clock, we reached the last frontier Police Station of Afghanistan, 8 miles from the border. There our passport and exit permits were examined. Though we were running under the joint flag of Afghanistan and Hindusthan on the bonnet of our car, yet it was necessary for them to examine our identity, because Afghanistan was very much afraid of foreign penetration.

By 4-30 P.M. we reached Torkham and learnt

that the frontier police had already been informed that a high Indian Embassy official was going to Peshwar and there should be sufficient police protection for him. We took rest in the waiting room and were entertained very well by the keeper of the rest room. It was so full of flies and dirt that we found it difficult to stay there. There were tips of half-burnt cigarettes and Biridis strewn all over the floor and also broken tea cups near the door. We just learnt that about 20 minutes before there was a tree fight between two groups of tribal Afghans who were occupying the rest house and enjoying drinks there. In course of the fracas there they used the tea cups and saucers as their weapons. It was not possible for the police to prevent them from fighting because they wanted somebody to be defeated straight in the fight, so that the truth of the contention of either party might be vindicated by the victory own.

Bhagat Singh put himself in contact with the frontier guards of Pakistan at the Torkham post and it was strange that no conveyance was available on the other side of frontier post, though officially Pakistan police was informed that the First Secretary of the Indian Embassy was going to Jalalabad. So Bhagat Singh just spoke to one of his

friends, who had opted to Pakistan, to obtain a seat in the bus which would ply to Peshwar. I followed Mr. Ohri and his family up to the gate of the check post bidding them good-by, wishing them a happy journey to and a safe return from Peshwar.

At about 9-30 P.M. we started back for Jalalabad. About 10 miles from Torkham, the police intercepted our car and said that by an order of the Government the road was closed and so we would have to take a route which would require us to cross about 10 miles extra from Torkham to Jalalabad. That meant that we would not reach Jalalabad before 1 o'clock at night because those 80 miles were almost impassable. I got very nervous because it was a circuitous road and was not known to the Indian driver of our car. So, I just took a bold stand and introduced myself as Safir-i-Hindusthan, that is, the ambassador of India. The Pakistan Police was rather struck at my bold assertion that if they did not permit my car to proceed straight, I would at once report this to His Majesty the king of Afghanistan and the guard would have to take the consequence. The poor fellow allowed my car to proceed. But about forty minutes after on the other side of the road we were again prevented and this time the Police men would on

no account allow us to go unless we could produce a permit from the Kabul Police. I at once took my passport which was written in English and also my permit which was written in Persian and also a letter from the Minister of Afghanistan in Iran which definitely had no connection with my journey to or from Afghanistan. He looked at me with an eye of suspicion and thought that I was a spy. We had an altercation for about ten minutes. My driver then told him that if he did not allow us to go ahead he would leave the car there and just go to the vigil post on the top of the hill to the left and in that case the Policeman would have to bear all the consequences if the car was lost or damaged. The poor guard told us that it was impossible for him to disobey the order from Kabul stating that no car should be



On the way to Khyber Pass

allowed to pass that road after 4 o'clock in the afternoon and he showed me his watch that it was already

past 4-30 P.M. At once I put the minute hand of my clock back and made it look like five minutes to 4. He was bewildered and allowed us to go.

This was not the last hurdle. Just on the edge of a hill to the left of the Kabul river suddenly the car refused to move because a very crucial part of the machinery was broken. I thought that it was on some evil moment that I undertook my journey to Torkham. It looked as if we would have to pass the whole night there till another car came and helped us to repair the car or to tow the car behind a lorry or a bus and carry it to the embassy of Jalalabad. It was already dark because we had to wait there for about two hours trying our best to do the necessary repairs. But there were not sufficient tools in the car. It might be that the tribal people might come at night and take away everything, take the car on the top of a mountain and let it fall in a deep pit or throw it in the River Kabul so that it might be washed away by the rushing waters of the ferocious currents of the River Kabul. I just asked the driver if there was any habitation nearby. He told me that the only habitation which could be had there was the burial ground. The driver was a man from Madras and had come for service there in the embassy because he was during the second world war a driver

mechanic in P.I. Force. Anyway, I just remember that in course of the journey in the desert of Sahara in 1945, I was stranded like this in the desert all alone with Professor Hasan Fateh Salauddin el Azam. There we were saved by a miracle and here also I felt that some miracle would happen and God would not wish me die in this land and lay my bones here. Anyway, I resigned to the will of God for a few minutes.

Just a few minutes after, we heard the blowing of a horn from behind. The driver jumped up and said that certainly an automobile was coming this way and he began to blow the horn of our car unceasingly. It was about 7-30 P.M. and the gentleman who was inside the bus would not allow us to be stranded there. He asked his driver and cleaner and also two other officers who were with him to ask us who we were. I gave my introduction and he requested his party to see if it was possible for them to repair the car and make it move. If all attempts failed, they would certainly pick me up and take me to Jalalabad. I asked my driver if it would be possible for him to stay there alone. He almost began to cry in Madrasi tongue that if he stayed back there alone, he would be charged with stealing the car by the embassy because by next morning no trace of the car would be left

and if he was not allowed to go with us, he would be killed by the Afghans. He was in a dilemma and I was in a fix. We discussed the matter for half an hour. In the meantime, the driver mechanic of the bus suddenly discovered that there was no wrong with the car except the mal-adjustment of the spring which took him half an hour to discover and repair in five minutes. The driver-mechanic told my driver that he should not have been so foolish as not to find out the simple defect of the car before he took up so long a journey from Kabul to Torkham and back. The poor driver said that the mechanic in Kabul told him that the car was O.K. Whoever might be responsible for this incident or accident, I am thankful to God that He saved us from the jaws of sure death had not this bus arrived in time.

By 9-30 P.M. we reached Jalalabad and found Mr. Kasyap loitering in the embassy gate in a very agitated mood. He at once jumped up and asked the driver what made him delay so long. If he had not come within half an hour, certainly the Consul would have informed the magistracy in Jalalabad to send scouts to search out our dead bodies. The road from Torkham to Jalalabad was not at all safe at night. How could the driver have enough courage to delay so long? Politely I narrated the whole

incident to Mr. & Mrs. Kasyap and both of them congratulated us on our narrow escape.

Mrs. Kasyap at once asked me to go to the bath for a wash in hot water, but unfortunately I had no spare clothes with me, because it was arranged that I would return to Kabul that night. I was perspiring and my shirt was wet with perspiration. I just washed my face and did not change my clothes. Thereafter, I came back to the lawn and Mr. Kasyap just wanted to read the lines of my hand. He at once told me that I had lost a valuable part of my body very recently. I learnt that Mr. Kasyap was a very good palmist and he was a man who was very much devoted to this science and had studied it thoroughly. He knows the art of reading hands, if not the science of palmistry. Mrs. Kasyap called us for the dinner and on the dinner table Mr. Kasyap told me that for about three months I would have to face more troubles from my friends whom I trusted so much. But this cloud would be over by the end of the year and I would have a plair sailing for three years more. To guard myself against the influence of the evil star, it would be wise for me to read the Gita in the early morning at least one verse, if not one chapter and also to pray as I felt, to whom I liked and for what I prized.

I slept under the open sky and there were terrible mosquitos and they went on humming around me with a whole night program.

10th. June

In the early morning I rose up, and by 6 o'clock we started for Hadda once the site of the capital of Kanishka on way to Jalalabad.

We took a stroll round the city of Jalalabad in the car of Mr. Kasyap. The city is an old one—very old and it is connected with India from the time of Kanishka. Near it lies the city of Nagarhar which was the summer capital of Kanishka. A large number of deposits have been taken away from the city, ruins of which now lie 8 miles away from the capital of the present province of Jalalabad. There was a colony of the Bactro-Greeks near about Hadda which was one of the most interesting architectural sites in Afghanistan. I have seen these deposits in the Kabul Museum. The most interesting articles amongst these deposits are the ivory figures, caskets and boats. Such a boat is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length and the widest diameter is about 12 inches. The stucco work and the ivory work depicting the life of Buddha and some of the *Boddhisattwas* are exquisite. It seemed that Indian stone-cutters and ivory workers were imported here because of the dearth of

architects and ivory workers in Afghanistan. During the Muslim period, Jalalabad was one of the recruiting centres of the Afghan army. From here Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni started on an expedition to India personally and other parties started from Ghazni via Qandahar.

During the time of Babur, Jalalabad was a part of the province of Qandahar where Humayun was the Governor for sometime. Humayun had come to this region while he was driven out of India by Sher Shah and from here he directed an expedition against his half-brother Kamran. A part of the early life of Akbar was spent here till he was captured by Kamran. Akbar, before he left for India following his father, stayed for sometime in Jalalabad. It was Jalaluddin Akbar who named this strategic spot connecting Peshwar-Kabul as *Jalalabad* after his own name *Jalal*. Jalalabad has a long connection with the Indian history. Qandahar was the bone of contention between the Safawids of Persia and the Timuridis of Hindusthan. Round about Jalalabad and Khyber Pass, many battles were fought between the Safawids and Timuridis. Thereafter Jalalabad changed hands. However, these are facts of history which are known to every student of Indo-Afghan relations.

We took several rounds along the beautiful roads which connect Jalalabad with the military stations around. There are several beautiful parks at Jalalabad. The most important of them is the royal garden, the Sirajul Imrat and Kawkab. Amir Habibulla's tomb lies opposite to the Sirajul Imrat where a new mosque has been built.

Incidentally I had a talk with Mr. Kasyap about the position of the Afghan tribes around Jalalabad in their attitude towards Pakistan and Afghanistan. Really Afghanistan is still planning the incorporation of the tribal areas which are now included in the Pakhtunistan. Pakhtunistan starts from the northern end of Kashmir and along the North-Western Province of British India it runs and runs along Jalalabad and Qandahar and touches the eastern frontier of Khorasan. This area is strategically very important. Mr. Kasyap told me that he had written a report about the attitude of the tribal peoples towards the problem of Pakhtunistan vis-a-vis Afghanistan and Pakistan. These Pakhtuns are not politically conscious but they are very sensitive when their independence is touched. Whether they are under Pakistan or Afghanistan, they would never tolerate any interference with their personal or tribal freedom. They are susceptible to bribe because they are very poor.

They have been systematically taught to be bribed by the British on the condition that they would not make any depredation in the main land of India. Now the British are gone but the habit of the Pakhtuns in regard to taking bribes remains. Mr. Kasyap corroborated that if the Shaikh takes bribe from Afghanistan, the son of the Shaikh would take bribe from Pakistan. They like one thing very much—the radio. They like music through radio. Medical treatment is seldom necessary ; book education, they dislike, because it is irreligious ; scientific approach to life, they abhor, because it is not advocated by the Mollas. They are steeped in ignorance and superstition. Afghanistan is now bribing the parents of bright young tribal boys for the purpose of taking them to Kabul where they are given free education, free food and also pocket money and they are to be trained as good Afghan citizens. These boys are doctinated with pro-Afghan ideas and there they learn the language of Poshtu, the official language of Afghanistan. They are taught the national anthems of Afghanistan which they sing every morning. From the age of 5 to 9 they are kept in Afghan Schools and then sent back to their homes for a year. They come back with new friends on the same terms and conditions with which the old boys were induced to

come to Afghanistan. This is a form of sly propaganda with which the tribal peoples are being bribed. Mr. Kasyap seems to be a very intelligent man and he knows the problem of Pakhtuns very much.

Incidentally, I asked him what was the relation of the Consul of India and Pakistan at Jalalabad. He said that the Pakistan Consul was a friend of his, because they were students at Lahore before Partition and both of them were good hockey players. Mr. Kasyap then told me that inspite of good relations between India and Afghanistan and their official opposition against the Baghdad Pact, if there was actually a war between India and Pakistan, certainly the Muslims of Afghanistan would join the side of Pakistan and not Hindusthan though India is a friend of Afghanistan. To the Muslims, the appeal of religion would work miracle. After all, the bond of religion amongst the Muslims all over the world inspite of their local and mutual differences would act as a unifying factor. It is their natural tendency. On the whole, that is the attitude of the Muslims towards the problem of States.

Mr. Kasyap told me that in the route between Kabul and Jalalabad there stands a garden made by Shajahan. Shajahan brought a large number of

poplar trees from India and got them planted all along the road and some of them still stand.

After visiting the sites around Jalalabad, Nagarhar and Hadda, we returned to the Consulate at about 8-30. It was terribly hot and I had practically no bath. So just hurrying through my lunch in hot haste, I took my car at about 11 A.M. and straight drove towards Kabul. By 3 o'clock in the evening I came back to my Kabul Hotel and I found Mr. Donlin and Mr. Gulji anxiously waiting for me because I did not return the previous night. Mr. Gulji was so much over-joyed that he jumped up and caught hold of my hands and just dragged me to my room and asked me to have my bath immediately, because I looked as if I had not my shave for three days and my hair was all covered with dust. So, I at once went to my bath and had a good wash with hot water. I became quite refreshed. By that time Mr. Gulji had arranged for my evening tea which was as good as my dinner. We had a talk of what I had seen at Jalalabad and experienced at Torkham.

I described to them the beauty of the mountain on both sides of the road to Jalalabad and gave him my impression on the rivers and hills in Afghanistan. He was astonished to find that I could remember so vividly every important land mark of the area I had

covered during the last 36 hours. What appealed to him most was the Panch Sir, the river Kabul and Khyber Pass. The Pamir Plateau, otherwise called the roof of the world, starts from the Hindukush and ends in the Himalayan Range. Eastern part of the Hindukush is about six thousand feet high and forms the western part of the Pamir. Then it touches the border of Chitrol to the south, Russian territory to the north and Sinkiang Province of China.

The Hindukush had always a charm for me because it is claimed to be the earliest home of our ancestors. This is what we read in our school books. Another mountain range which extends from east to west occupy the central position of Afghanistan's mountain range. It has started from the Bamian Range. It is particularly covered with snow and a number of streams with their tributaries flow from this range called Kohi Baba. The tributaries of Helmond river have their starting point in this Kohi Baba Range.

The Safid-Koh Range separates from the Hisar mountain and connects Hari-rud river and Morkad river valley. Safid-Koh means a white mountain because its colour is always white owing to perpetual snow.

There is another mountain range called Siah-Koh,

the black range. It is lesser in height than Safid-Koh but it is longer in extent. One portion of this Siah-Koh has two horns. The peaks are so placed that they look like horns. The rivers flowing from this range discharge their water into the Caspian Sea and another tributary flows into the Indus.

The Solomon Range so famous in the Indian History lies to the southern boundary of Afghanistan. All these mountains are connected with one another and practically they are the natural walls around Afghanistan, as if they are the guardian diety of mother *Ariana*.

I gave a description of the rivers of Afghanistan as I had found them on my way to Torkham. The most important river which runs through the heart of Afghanistan is the Kabul River from which the name of the city possibly has been derived. Whether the river gave the name to the city, or the city gave the name to the river is still a controversial point. The Kabul River flows to the east and after passing through Dakka and the frontier of Afghanistan it enters into the valley of Peshwar. There it is joined by the Sewat and Panchkura rivers which flow into the Indus river near Atak. The next important river is the Helmond. It is the largest inland river of Afghanistan. It flows from K. Baba and irrigates

a large tract of land and then discharges itself in Beluchistan. Another tributary of Helmond river just loses itself on the border of South Qandahar.

The third important river is the Hari-Rud, Rud in Persian means a river. This river flows towards the west and encircles Hirat and then disappears in the Torkham region. It is really the stream of vitality of Hirat

The river Amu-Daria flows from the Pamir Plateau and separates Afghanistan from the Soviet Union. Its tributaries all discharge themselves into the Ural Sea. The Morgab river springs from Safid-Coh and finally disappears into the desert.

The Hari-Rud starts from Siah-Koh and then discharges into the Seistan desert.

Other four small rivers have their origin from the four valleys of the Hindukush Range and these rivers are named after the peaks from which they start journey such as Andarab, Sorkab, Panch Sir and Gorbant.

Mr. Gulji again asked me how I could remember so many names. I said that I had read them in the geography of Afghanistan while I was in Iran in order to be acquainted with the topography of the land and then I have seen some of these rivers and I have read about some of them in history and

others in geography. I took two photographs of the Kabul River, and there were with me few pictures of the mountains which I had purchased already. So my pictures tallied with the story that I gave to Mr. Gulji.

At about 6 o'clock, I went to Mr. Gulji's exhibition of paintings. He gave me a list of the purchases made by the Swedes, Germans and the English but not by the people of U. S. A. because the Americans had the tendency to go in for things of cheap appeal. They do not go deep into the lines in the back-ground. What meets their eyes is liked by them and not what appeals to their heart. The Americans have no imagination, so complained Mr. Gulji. They pay well ; they pay at least three times more than what an Englishman would pay for the same thing.

In the reception room I was introduced to Mrs. and Mr. Thompson of Yorkshire who had just come from London to join the British Embassy here. I had long talk about Pakistan with the couple and they felt that I was a Pakistani. So they gave me their mind. I could feel that this British Embassy and their people had much interest in Pakistan. Though they were very careful not to express it directly, yet the feeling was there. Mr. Thompson invited me to

drink in his hotel that night but I begged to be excused as I was to attend a musical party organised by the Afghan Renaissance Club. Dr. Zhobal had invited me to the Afghan Music Soiree which I could not miss. I could not oblige Mr. Thompson by accepting his invitation to drink. I came to the hotel and found Dr. Zhobal waiting for me with his car. I did not take my dinner but accompanied Dr. Zhobal and asked my hotel boy to keep my dinner in my room.

At 9-30 P.M. we reached the Afghan Renaissance Club. There we found some noted artistes of Afghanistan—many coming from outside Kabul. That was not in my honour but that was a regular monthly meeting of the musicians of Kabul and as I was present in Kabul, I was specially invited to attend the sitting of the Club.

In the middle of the floor there were a few flower vases arranged in a circle and in the middle of the circle there was a small vase on which incense was burning. It looked as if I was in Indian atmosphere where incense was so common an item on such occasions. Round the circle the artists were sitting with their instruments. Almost all of them were modern which we find in other countries. These were local instruments the like of which I had seen

in Siraj, all, except only two of them. There were some instruments like lute which were a mixture of our *Setar* and *Behala*. Another was a long pipe-like instrument about four feet in length and with a semicircular loud-speaker at the end. There was another instrument which is like our *Jaltaranga*. It is beaten by a very soft pad attached to a rod. The sound is very sweet. I do not know what the base of the instrument was made of. It looked as if it was a very old instrument but it was in constant use. Only it was a little worn out in colour. But the player who was using it saluted it almost in an Indian fashion. There was also an instrument like harmonium and an instrument like our *Pakhwaj*.

As soon as we entered the hall, all the musicians stood up and shook hands with me as if it had been told to them already that I was a great connoisseur of Indian music and it was also known to Dr. Zhobal that I had written a book on Music in Islam though that book had not anything relating to musical science. It dealt only with the theological aspect of Music in Islam. One of the gentlemen present asked me if music was permissible in Islam and whether the love which the modern Afghans demonstrated for music was against their religion. I told them that it was not a place for a

discussion on the permissibility of music in Islam because it was a long story ; there was always a controversy over this question. In order to satisfy them I quoted three verses from the Quran—"Do not purchase that thing which takes you away from the path of Allah". And that prohibited thing is music. Of course, one verse I quoted from Hafiz that 'music is the shortest-cut path from men to God'. The world came out of the sound as the Indians think. Sound is universe (*Sabda Brahma*). So within five minutes I finished my comments on music and its permissibility ; my words were very much appreciated by them, and then Dr. Zhobal asked me no more questions.

The music of the Afghans has got two appeals, appeal of sound and appeal of sense. Everyone of them was looking at me as to how I was appreciating their music. I was no expert in music. Their music appeared rather dull and monotonous. May be that it was due to my not following their words. Really I was so innocent of music. But they could not understand. Such occasions I had also in Egypt when I had to play the role of a connoisseur of music without knowing much about it.

We attended the party for about a hundred

minutes and occasionally there were free distributions of hot coffee, chocolates etc. We, in India, generally form an idea of the mind and heart of the Afghans from their rough exterior, i.e., from their big body, long beards, dirty clothes, big turbans, hard shoes and the soled sticks in their hands. But beneath the rough exterior of an Afghan there is a soft heart, very responsive, sentimental and emotional. Just beneath the surface, the Afghans are different. If you do not touch their religion where they are very sensitive, you can make very good friends with them. I am not judging the Afghan from the psychological point of view. As a man approaches a man, I approached the Afghans and found that they were very responsive. May be that the background of politics has something to do with them in the present context. However, I should be cautious, after what I have heard from Mr. Kasyap and what I have learnt from the gist of talks with the Pakistan's Consul at Jalalabad that whatever may be their emphasis on politics, the real Afghans are essentially religious, though superstitious, and would respond to any appeal which touches their religion.

At 12-30 midnight we returned to the hotel and

I had my dinner which was kept in my room. I jotted down the day's interests in my diary which was rather crowded for the day. Then I went to bed.

Just within half an hour, I heard a cry from my next room where a Japanese girl was residing alone. She did not know English, nor Persian, nor any other language except Japanese. She opened her door and just in front of the door she was shivering sitting on the sofa in the drawing room and tears rolled down her cheeks. She sobbed and sobbed. A box was lying on her lap. What she was telling I could not understand. Mr. Gulji and Mr. Donlin came out of their room and within ten minutes practically all the residents of the first floor had collected round her and nobody could understand why she was sobbing. But I could feel that she had lost something from the jewel box. I pointed out to her jewel box and wanted to see it, but she would not like to part with it and sharply closed it. So I could not know whether some important documents or some jewels had been lost or some cash not found. So Mr. Gulji phoned to the nearest Police Station to contact the Japanese Consul there and to bring somebody who could understand her language. Within half an hour, a

Japanese came from the Consulate and on seeing the Japanese, she uttered only three or four words, rushed in her room and practically turned out the Japanese who had come from the Consulate. It was a peculiar situation which nobody could understand except she and the Japanese gentleman. We stood befooled and went back to our room. It was 1-30 past midnight.

11th June.

I wrote a letter in the morning to our Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, and in it I gave him my impression about Afghanistan. It was not a full impression but it was just a glimpse of what I felt about Afghanistan and the advice which I got from our ambassador Mr. Haskar. I went to the University at 9 o'clock in the morning and had a discussion with the Vice-Chancellor about Pakhtunistan. He wanted me to deliver a lecture on Pakhtunistan. but our ambassador had advised me not to do so in public. I, therefore, agreed to speak about Pakhtunistan in a meeting of some chosen people who would be allowed to attend my discussion on special invitation. At about 12 o'clock before lunch, there was a discussion between us about Pakhtunistan and I gave my views and also the views of the average Indians towards Pakhtunistan.

The most striking point about Pakhtunistan was that internationally speaking no member of the U.N.O. will raise this question in the U.N.O. Assembly. India was diplomatically unwise to approach U.N.O. over the issue of Kashmir. The Prime Minister of India should have known the possible reaction of India's approach before he went to U.N.O. over this issue. In doing so, Pandit Nehru was guided more by principles than by diplomacy. May be, he wanted to make a test case about the problem and intentions of U.N.O. He ought to have known that grudgingly Englishmen conceded to leave India and it was out of grudge that Pakistan was created and that if any opportunity would come, the British would use it as a handle against India. The way during the last ten years, U.N.O. had been dealing with the Kashmir problem, was really not unexpected. Anyway, I discussed the geography of Pakhtunistan, its composition of tribes, its background during the plebiscite of 1947 when Sir Alexander Olaf, the Governor of N.W.F.P. used all his power, diplomacy and money to win over the frontier people in favour of Pakistan. The people of Afghanistan also sided with the people of the frontier in their attempt to win over the frontier region in favour

of a Muslim State. The people of Afghanistan felt that Pakistan being a Muslim State would not be unwilling to allow the people of N.W.F.P. and the people residing beyond the Durand Line to go over to Afghanistan which was also a Muslim State. But within two years of the creation of Pakistan, Afghanistan was disillusioned because this tribal area from Kashmir in the north up to Khorasan in the south became the recruiting ground for Pakistan's army. The wealth beneath this soil has not yet been tapped, and there is a good deal of possibility of finding out the oil wealth, because there may be a deposit of oil from the south of Iran—a belt running all along the whole sub-soil bed.

Pakistan is trying her best to win over the people of Pakhtunistan because it will be the real basis of their existence. Pakistan does not count too much on Eastern Bengal which, they think will be with them so long as the Bengali Muslims would like. They do not deny that though there is a religious link, the attitude of East Pakistan is rather uncertain, because of the intellectual level of the people of East Pakistan which is high in comparison to that of the people of West Pakistan.

Then the people present in the gathering began to ask me questions about the reaction of India if Afghanistan declares a war against Pakistan over the Pakhtunistan issue. The Afghans are rather uneasy because India has stopped propaganda in Poshtu language from the Delhi centre and because there is no politico-cultural link between the present Afghanistan and India in the absence of propaganda in favour of Afghan demand for Pakhtunistan. Prime Minister Nehru does not like to antagonise Pakistan over the issue of Pakhtunistan which Pakistan claims to be a domestic problem. Internationally speaking, India should not interfere with the domestic problem of a country, because both India and Pakistan are members of the Commonwealth of Nations and members of Bandung Block. The recrimination through radio and through newspapers should not be resorted to in the interest of better understanding between the two countries which Pandit Nehru thinks to be desirable. The people of Afghanistan has a very great respect for Pandit Nehru. This I have also found in Iran. He is personally respected and his approach to politics is very much appreciated in the Middle East. The Afghans take India to be their Big Brother. Iran has got respect

for India but it has love for Pakistan. The Indians are tolerated in Iran, but Pakistan is welcome in Iran. In Afghanistan, the people have a nausea against the Pakistanis and for Indians they have a feeling of respect which has not yet been tested against the background of religion. After exchange of a few more questions and answers, we dispersed for lunch when it was about 1-30 P.M.

After lunch, I met Dr. Kohzad in his Ariana Club. We discussed about the plan of the book—The Legacy of Afghanistan, and he gave me a large number of pamphlets in Persian and two in English. A few issues of his paper Ariana were also handed over to me which would give a glimpse of the cultural relation between Afghanistan and India in ancient times, specially the unity of architectural achievements of both the countries. In his opinion the origin of human civilisation was in Afghanistan just opposite to the view of the Iranian Professor Mogaddam who claims that the origin of civilisation was in Iran.

In the meantime, Prof. Husain Shah came in search of me to discuss with me the plan of my lecture on "Shape of Islam in India to-day". After discussing a few points with him, I asked

him to come to me at night after 9 o'clock when I would give him a copy of my lecture intended to be delivered in the University on the 13th. I told him that my lecture might not be liked by the Afghan Muslims because the interpretation of Islam which Indians give certainly differs from that which Afghanistan expects. Professor Husain Shah promised to come to me at night at 9 o'clock and I invited him to dinner in my hotel.

I went back to my hotel at about 4 P.M. and immediately started writing out my lecture on the 'Shape of Islam in India to-day.'

It was 7 o'clock in the evening when Mr. Moktedari, the Iranian Councillor came and informed me that we would start for Ghazni nextday before 4-30 in the morning. Incidentally we discussed the relation between India and Iran at the background of our relation with Pakistan. Mr. Moktedari told me many things about the diplomatic relations between India, Iran and Pakistan. But he did not mention anything about Afghanistan. He praised Americans for their technical skill and progress and the help they had given to Iran under cover of the Point Four Programme. He was very much disgusted with the

Russians because of the way they treated the Iranians who belonged to the Tude Party after the failure of Mossadeq. He told me that he had no sympathy for the party, but he could not really understand the logic of the Russians when they encouraged coup d'état against the Shah. The moment the coup d'état failed and the Iranian rebels crossed the frontier into the Russian territory, they were hounded out of the Soviet Union because they had failed in their attempt. They were not given any shelter, far less food and clothes, though many of them were without food and clothes when they were fleeing from their native land. When these unfortunate Iranians came back to their country, they were again hounded out by the agents of the Shah. They were not wanted in Iran, nor they were sheltered in Russia. So they rubbed their nose against the dust of Iran and they took an oath that they would not trust Russia in future. Anyway, I did not like to comment on the complaint of Mr. Moktedari about Russia.

In the meantime, Mr. Gulji and Mr. Donlin of California entered and we started discussing also the peoples of Europe especially the Englishmen and the French. Mr. Donlin said that the Englishmen are good friends but they are very slow in making

friendship. They will welcome you, but when their national interest intervenes, they change. According to Mr. Donlin, the Frenchmen are cultured but they possess too much of culture. They are interested mostly in gaiety, in wine and dance. In France men make quite good friends. A French lady will lend you her company during the whole night, but in the morning she will not recognise you. Mr. Gulji gave his experience about the Scandinavians; they have little respect for feminine chastity. To a Scandinavian woman there is no scruple in her companionship with a man after marriage. She takes a man as a passenger in a bus. She freely enjoys men's company after she is married and all her chastity ends with her marriage. Before marriage she is almost always very chaste and very decent; but once she is married, she gets the freedom of man's company. I asked Mr. Moktedari what was his opinion about Indian women, because he was in India for a long number of years as a Cultural Attache. Mr. Moktedari said frankly that the Indians are good friends and they are very responsive. You can win them over by sweet words and they are gullible. They have no experience in diplomacy. Indians think, what is right in logic is also right in practice. Indians are

very proud of their culture and if you touch their pride, they become upset. They are ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their own country. He asked me to refer to the history of I.N.A. and said, "Your Bose was practically offered everything that an Indian possessed in Burma and in the countries of Far Eastern Asia ; even now if occasion arises, Indians would sacrifice everything for their country, though their sacrifice may not bring out the result which they would try for."

I asked him what was his opinion about the dictatorship of President Ayub Khan. He said that Pakistan would improve much if General Ayub Khan is allowed to live for another ten years. But the difficulty is that the Pakistanis are a peculiar mixture. In Eastern Pakistan they have got a population which is peculiarly different from the people of Western Pakistan. The Sindhis are different from the Punjabis. Again the people of Beluchistan are of a type different from the Sindhis. Pakhtuns are again different from all other Pakistanis. The Pakistanis are very sore over the problem of Kashmir which is not so strategical now ; but Kashmir is a point of honour. I asked him whether the canal water bogey or the fear of starving Pakistan by stopping water from the Sutlej was

responsible for this feeling. He said that even if Kashmir is handed over to Pakistan, the cancer will not be cured. It lies deeper. Incidentally, Mr. Moktedari told me that my lecture on the contribution of Afghan hegemony on the medieval Indian culture was very much appreciated by the elite of Kabul and that it had been published in many journals of Afghanistan. He also told me, "The attitude of the Indian Embassy in regard to your lecture was disappointing. Your Embassy, in my opinion, should have sent these notes to your External Affairs Ministry at New Delhi and they should have publicised it over the radio so that the Afghans would be happy to feel that the Indians are grateful to the Afghans for their contribution to the Indian culture". He asked me "Do you not find that the exhibition of Mr. Gulji's paintings has been so much publicised by Pakistan radio and flashed out all over the world that the Americans have arranged an exhibition of a Pakistani artist at their cost? It has strengthened the cultural ties between Pakistan and U.S.A." I found that Mr. Moktedari was really a diplomat and knew how to make a propaganda.

He told me that the elite of Kabul had begun to like me very much and that he had heard from

some very highly placed officers of the Government of Kabul that India should send more mature men to Afghanistan for cultural propaganda. I was rather feeling embarrassed when these people were praising me in my face.

We agreed to start next morning for Ghazni. I heard that a telegram had already been sent to the Governor of Ghazni for arrangements to make my visit comfortable there. 'Mr. Gulji also agreed to accompany us with his camera. I found that the circumstances had made my visit to Kabul very attractive both for me and the people of Afghanistan.

12th June :

Exactly at 4-50 A.M. the Iranian Embassy car with Mr. Moktedari blew its horn at the door of the Hotel Kabul. I was ready by then after completing my shave, bath and morning exercise. I had also awakened Mr. Gulji at about 4-10 A.M. and it was a trial for me to wake him up because he had come to the hotel at about 12 midnight and was rather heavily drunk at a party given by the Pakistani Ambassador. By 4-30 A.M., our breakfast was ready. Mr. Gulji had not time to take his bath or shave. Rather he was still drowsy. Somehow he put his coat and overcoat on. He took his

camera and sixty films. Already a telephonic message had been sent to the Governor of Ghazni confirming that we were going there as guest of the University of Kabul and also that Moktedari, Councillor of the Iranian Embassy, would accompany us. So it was expected that we would have a right royal reception there.

Ghazni was 124 miles from Kabul. On both sides of the road there was a very good green vegetation though there was no trace of water along the road except some artificial irrigation canals and those too carried only thin water. On either side along the road there were some tombs of some holy men and we could make an idea of the men who were buried there by the number of stones thrown at their graves. The greatness of a man in many countries of Islam is measured by the number of stones thrown at his grave. There was also some torn clothes in different colours specially red and green on top of poles which were pitched near the graves. Along two sides of the road, there were certain *Kafilas* or caravans mostly of sheep but of no camel or cow. These caravans were not really of the type which I had seen in Iran coming from Khorasan to Abed during the months of summer. These were flocks of sheep carried from one market

to the other on the occasion of 'Id'. They were, of course, not large in number and looked like the 'Id' bazar occasions which we also find in India.

By about 10 o'clock in the morning, we passed through the first gate of Ghazni. From a distance of about 20 miles, we could have a view of the great fort on the top of the mountain that encircles Ghazni. I was told by the driver of the car that this was exactly the palace where Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni used to reside. But now a new city is being built by the Afghan Government and out of ruins of the old the new edifices have been constructed. By about 10-30 we passed through the second gate and reached the heart of the city. The Governor's palace was just opposite to the old palace of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. It was really a thrill for me. Ghazni the city and its ruler had always a special fascination for all historians of India because it was this ruler who had really started conquering India for the Muslims and it was this city which had so many romantic tales of India with it.

As soon as our car blew its horn, the military guards of the Governor of Ghazni stood all attention with their guns and bayonets in hand looking proud with glazing helmets and flowing beards. The Governor Sayed Kassem Khan did not come

out of his Darbar, but his representative came up to the gate of the hill and offered us a welcome in a right royal fashion. I had never had the occasion of being received by the Governor of a proud country except in Syria which I visited with the Egyptian delegation of students in 1945 when it was still under French spell. Within two minutes, we were inside the Darbar when all the local Amirs stood up in our honour; and the guards retired. So after exchanging greetings we were escorted into the Darbar Hall.

Then I was introduced to the *Darbaris* as if it was an honour for them to be introduced to me and possibly I was more an object of curiosity and honour mixed than even Mr. Moktedari who had an official status while I had none. I was only a Professor and a guest of the University from a foreign country which was regarded as a friendly one. About the Iranians, the average Afghan had a prick of conscience because they are friends to Pakistan and a member of the Baghdad Pact and Afghanistan was outside the Pact and political conclave.

We were told that there was just a beginning of a museum in Ghazni where treasures were being collected and the Governor himself was the President of the Museum just started a year ago and

there had been a good deal of collection from-Ghazni itself. The Police Inspector who was in charge of the Museum would not allow us to visit it because the Government of Kabul had not yet permitted foreigners to visit the archeological and architectural treasures. But the Governor of Ghazni gave a special order to open the museum for the Indian savant. Mr. Moktedari was just kept at the background and I found that for reasons political or intellectual I was given the place of honour and not Mr. Moktedari. Of course, it was a great pleasure to me that Mr. Moktedari tried to push me forward. The Iranian Government had given me the honour of being a living link between Iran and India.

After taking our lunch, at about 1 o' clock, we started for a visit to the historical sites around Ghazni. The keeper of the Museum began to narrate the story of Ghazni and its old treasures. It took us about an hour to know the details of Ghazni because I was always in a mood to question and he was in a mood to answer.

Just in front of the Darbar Hall, we were photographed with the Governor. Then Mr. Gulji took about twenty shots with his camera detailing the four fronts from different directions and also

the common folk who were passing along the road.

We then went through the bazar and along the *Qila* (fort). There were seventeen Towers from



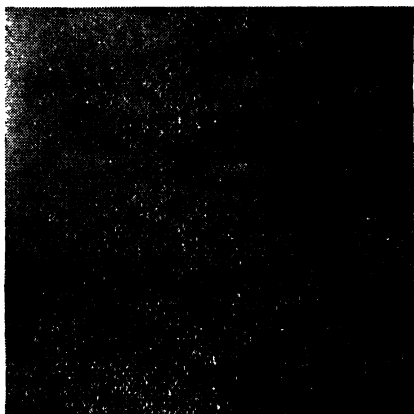
Mr. Moktedari, Iranian Councillor,
the Governor of Ghazni and
Prof. M. L. Roy Chowdhury

the fort, of Ghazni to the end of the city in the north. On the left side of the road, i. e. towards the west there was the main bazar. On the road side there was the *Laskargah* i.e the military encampments.

There were seventeen towers each

commemorating his expedition to foreign countries. Each tower was separated by a distance of four furlongs. Of these towers three are now in existence on their old sites. I could not measure the size of the towers by my plain eye though I was told that each tower was about 500 feet high. They were built of very thin bricks on a rectangular basis and there were several storeys

one upon the other with staircase from the ground floor up to the topmost. But I could not find the existence of the other towers though it seemed that there were some at least. These towers were of burnt bricks and on the first floor there was a balcony with a very small projection on four sides. I was told that every morning, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni used to ride along the road and see for himself the progress of construction of the towers that were being built every year as a monument of his victory and each tower had to be completed before he would return from the next expedition.



Tower of Victory of Sultan Mahmud at Ghazni

On the eastern side of the road, there was a vast field measuring about 10 miles by 15 miles north to south where prospective soldiers of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni would wait till they were recruited in regular army. These people used to

come from Central Asia, Ural Mountains, Hirat, Kabul, Qandahar, Khorasan and even from Azar Baizan in search of employment, of course, more in search of an opportunity for war and plunder. That the Indian expedition would be successful and that there would be plenty of booty and an opportunity for getting slaves was an inducement to these people who were warriors by nature and poor by circumstances. Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni would not give them any salary, nor would he give them horse, or weapons, or dress. These prospective soldiers were to find their own weapons and even their food till they would reach the main point of expedition in India. These prospective soldiers were sure of their victory because Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni was always favoured by Fate and crowned with victory. To be a member of his army was to have an opportunity to gain glory in war and a portion of plunder after the war. By killing the infidels in India, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni offered them an opportunity of becoming Ghazi or killer of infidels which meant that they would go to heaven after death. If they were killed, they would become Sahid in the sacred cause of turning the infidels' land into a land of believers (*Darul Harb* into *Darul Islam*). Sultan Mahmud of

Ghazni urged them in the name of religion, though his real objective was a mixed one and not wholly religious. The kingdom he inherited comprised Ghazni and Balkh ; the empire he built up extended from the Caspian Sea to Rajputana desert—2000 × 1400 miles.

There was also a portion in that *Laskargah* (campus for soldiers) which was known as *Nanuali* (*Nan* means bread). So *Nanuali* is generally the place where bread is baked and the area of the *Nanuali* convinced me that the number of soldiers which were served by this bakery would be about a hundred thousand, but that is a guess only.

I was shown a small canal-like opening along the eastern side of the road. Water of the city used to pass through the silver pipes along the canal. The hammam inside the royal palace was made of gold and even the bath room was plastered with gold. The pipe through which water would pass through the royal palace was made of gold. Of course, this gold and silver was the part of plunder from India. Though Sultan Mahmud had conquered Khorasan and Hīrat, there was not much prospect of booty there. The entire attention of Sultan Mahmud was turned towards India. He brought from India a

large number of slaves and there is a story current in Afghanistan that even a beggar in Ghazni had an Indian slave to beg for him during the regime of Sultan Mahmud.

In order to rebuild the city of Ghazni he brought from India 15 thousand architectural engineers and masons and with their help, he built the new city of Ghazni which was known as the Celestial Bridge. Most of the masons belonged to northern India, specially from the region between Mathura and Multan.

We were directed to go towards the north to visit the tomb of Sabuktagin, father of Sultan Mahmud. Before we reached the tomb of Sabuktagin to the left, we were asked to see the tomb of Belzar. Belzar was a saint and very much respected and revered in Afghanistan. It is told that Sultan Mahmud would not undertake any expedition unless he had consulted Saint Belzar and had received the blessings from him. Even to-day two annual festivals are celebrated round the tomb of Saint Belzar. A new guest house is being constructed just to the east of Belzar's tomb. We went to the top of the mountain where the unostentatious structure stands. We were told by the Imam who was the keeper of the mosque

that Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor, had visited Ghazni in 965 A.H. and there is a tablet in which the event has been mentioned. We took a photograph of the tomb and tablet which has been ascribed to Akbar. It is told that if anybody prays sincerely to the tomb, he is sure to get the saint's favour ; and many people come to the tomb to offer prayers for gaining their desired object. Who knows ? Akbar who was so mystic and believer in God might have come here to offer prayers. But in Indian history there is no mention of Akbar's entry into this place in 965 A.H. Anyway, the people like to believe this story and I also liked to record this story.

To the right of the tomb of Saint Belzar, a little to the north, there is the tomb of Sabuktagin. This tomb is almost in ruins. King Amanullah planned to rebuild this tomb. But before he could carry out his project, he was turned out of his kingdom. So this tomb is now surrounded by a wall and I was told that there is a plan to rebuild all the tombs in the area which testify to the glorious achievements of the Afghan kings.

Then we moved to the vast plains to the east of the road and visited the excavation of Sultan

Ibrahim's tomb. On the gate of the tomb there is an inscription which forbids people to enter into the inner precincts of the tomb. A large number of curios have been collected from the tomb of Sultan Ibrahim and deposited in the museum that is being built in the vicinity of the tomb of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. We walked a distance of half a mile back towards the city of Ghazni and were directed through very narrow lanes and alleys leading towards the tomb of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Before we reached the gate of the tomb of Sultan Mahmud we passed through a Madrasa where a large number of children were being taught by the Mollah. Just when Mr. Gulji was attempting to take a photograph of the children they ran away, firstly because it was against their religion to have photographs of the living men, secondly because they were afraid lest some misfortune would befall them. I noticed that they were very camera-shy. The teacher who was showing us the way, just tried to collect some children from the school to have them photographed along with their teachers. The result was that some of the boys out of fear just climbed up a Neem tree on the edge of the mosque. Just at that time, Mr. Gulji took a snap of these boys in their climb-

ing posture. But at once the boys out of fear either purposely jumped from the branch of the tree or actually fell down on the ground. The old Pir who was there told us in local language that it was really a warning for a boy because he was being photographed. As such, he had fallen down from the tree. He was sure that it was an augury of ill omen for the future of these boys. So Mr. Gulji stopped taking snaps of the boys on the side of the mosque.

Then we went into the tomb of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. In front of the Sepulchre, there is a small tank which was possibly used as a bathing place for the pious muslims before they said their prayers. The water of the tank though stagnant was not unclean, nor muddy, nor green in colour which is the usual colour of water in stagnant pools. I found a lot of people coming there



Tomb of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni

to take water from the pool which, they believe, have a charming effect on the skin-diseased people. We took off our shoes and touched a little water before we entered into the actual sanctuary on which the great Ghazi was lying in his eternal rest. The tomb was not an ostentatious one, nor was there much decoration on the inside walls, far less to speak of the serenity of the tomb at Sikandra or Agra in India. It was a testimony to poor architectural workmanship. On the four sides of the burial stone there were inscriptions in Cufic dealing on some events of the life of the great Sultan. Mr. Gulji tried to take a snap, but at once the keeper of the sanctuary intervened and said in spite of the Police officers accompanying us that snapping of the tomb was strictly forbidden under Islamic rules. I felt that we were really in Afghan territory where everything was directed in terms of religious injunctions. We found that there were flowers on the tomb and incense was burning in the usual Indian fashion. The people though orthodox were praying at the tomb in the hope of getting victory in the trials of their lives. There was a box below on the platform of the tomb of the great Ghazi at one corner where the believing people use to put coins in expectation that they

would be blessed with a thousand in return for one.

There was a big hole in the eastern side of the Sepulchre stone. This hole has a story to tell. This hole was made by Alauddin Jahansoz, the burner of the world, the founder of the Ghori dynasty. Jahansoz came to Ghazni in search of the jewels and diamonds which were supposed to have been buried along with the dead body of the dead Ghazi. It is told that when Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni was lying on his death bed, he became very sad by the thought that he would have to part with the great treasures of jewels, diamonds, gold and precious metals which he had collected throughout his life from all parts of the conquered lands. He asked his Wazir to bring before his eyes some valuable jewels and diamonds from his *Khazana* (treasury) because he wanted to have the last view of the great treasure before he would part with them for ever. The doors of his bed room were opened and the treasures, as far as possible, were placed before his view. The collection amounted to a hillock of stones, jewels, diamonds, gold etc. Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni became more and more weary at the thought of leaving these worldly treasures for which he had toiled throughout his life. Tears rolled

down his cheeks as he looked and looked. He died looking and looking. Even after his death his eyes were not closed because of the thirsty delight which he had been enjoying at the sight of these jewels and diamonds. His dead body was carried to the burial ground and a large number of his favourite jewels and diamonds were buried along with his dead body. So runs the story.

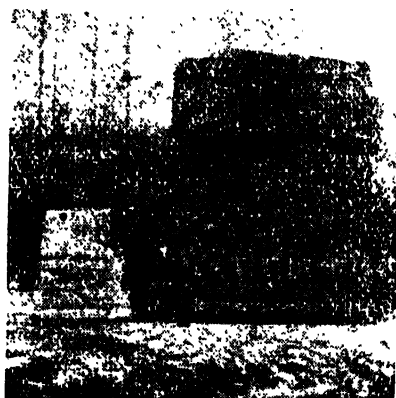
Jahansoz conquered Ghazni and he heard the story of large treasures having been buried with Sultan Mahmud. He came to the place and dug the Sepulchre and made a hole inside to get into these diamonds and jewels. In fact, the story runs that Jahansoz took away all the treasures which he had found in the grave of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Hence is the hole below the platform of the tomb and it still continues to be there.

Coming out of the tomb, we were invited by the old Pir of the mosque to a cup of tea. The keeper who was rather harsh to us at the beginning in connection with taking photographs, now approached us with a spirit of sincere generosity and hospitality of an Afghan. As our time was short, we begged to be excused, but he insisted on our taking tea so that he might feel that we had not been displeased with him. We were obliged

to take tea with him. Mr. Gulji whispered into my ears that I should not be anxious for taking a photograph because he had done so already without their knowledge and that the Mollah should not know that he was also photographed.

We were then directed towards the museum which was being newly built. The museum was still in course of preparation. It was not really the site for a museum which was yet to be selected. But it was temporarily the store-room where the articles and collections had been deposited. The Governor had already told us that this museum when completed will show the connection between India and Ghazni during the Muslim period. We took a large number of photographs of almost all the materials that were collected there. The most attractive of all these, from the Indian point of view, were the stone pillars engraved with statues of elephants. Elephants are not the animals to be found in Afghanistan. There was a lotus on the tomb inscribed beautifully and lotus is also a taboo on the walls of a mosque. Inscription of lotus was a contribution by India to Afghan arts. There were statues of soldiers with Indian turbans on their heads ; and flowing garments of Indian type also decorated the statues. The figures had

earings which definitely showed that they were Indians. There was not a single figure of woman



Elephant Statue of India in
Ghazni Museum

either on stones or on the walls. The paintings that I could find in Ghazni or Kabul of the Muslim period did not reveal the picture of a woman as we could find in Iran. The Police Inspector who was with us told us that even now some of the local songs

current round Ghazni depicted the relation between India and Ghazni and he just recited two of them. They are lullaby songs telling the story of adventure of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni against Somenath which they called *Samanijah*.

We then started back to the palace of the Governor. On the way we visited many tombs. The most important of them was the tomb of Senai. Mr. Moktedari was a pious muslim and he offered prayers in almost all the tombs and paid

some contributions as an act of merit. Though Mr. Moktedari was a *Shia*, he had no scruple to offer prayers at the tomb of *Sunni* saints. These people would not scruple to drink wine against the injunction of the Quran, yet they do not hesitate to say prayers before a tomb with a spirit of complete devotion. Mr. Moktedari was very much pleased to see me offering money to the various collection boxes attached to the mosques in the name of Allah and to the Fakirs who begged alms at the door of the tombs. In course of our conversation, he said that no one could suspect from my behaviour and talk that I was not a believer in Islam. I told him that Hindu religion did not forbid believing in the religion of other peoples and the Hindus tolerate every religion, because according to them, 'paths are many, but the destination is one.' A Hindu could remain a Hindu even without believing in the existence of God. To a Hindu, *man* is superior to his *religion*. He was rather astonished to hear me speaking in the strain that a man might remain a religions without believing in the existence of God. He told me, "this peculiar idea of the Hindus was due to the fact that the Hindu religion has no founder. Hinduism was not based on the teachings of any individual prophet." I made him understand

my view point that Truth is writ large all over the creation—in the leaves of trees, in the stones of mountains, in the water drops of river and in the stars of the sky. An inner sight is required to see the glory of the Creator in His creation. A trained ear is necessary to hear the message of the Creator which resounds all over the creation, and a responsive heart is necessary to respond to the call that the Creator is always extending to man. It depends on the individual capacity of the man to perceive the glory of the Creator, to hear the message of the Creator and to respond to the call of the Creator.

It was in the midst of our conversation that a lame appeared singing a mystic song in the colloquial tongue. Mr. Moktedari asked me to hear the song and he explained to me the words of the song. It was almost an echo to what I was telling. The song meant that Allah has given men eyes, yet they see not ; He has given them ears, yet they hear not ; He has given them feelings, yet they touch not. This is exactly a part cut out of the Quran and sung in the local Afghan tune and tongue.

We now arrived in the curio market in an ancient part of Ghazni. There was a large number of shops on two sides of the bazar—the shops of sweet-meat, the shops of cobblers, of bronze and

copper-smiths and of gold-smiths, and shops selling various other sorts of articles. There were also a few shops of old coins. Some of these coins were alleged to belong to the ancient kings of Iran and Afghanistan from the Sassanian period up to the latest Nadir Shahi period. The owners of the coins sell these coins to foreigners at a covetable price. The coin-dealers have peculiar method of approaching the foreign buyers. These people are so experienced that they understand at sight the strength of the pocket of the visitors and raise or lower their price according to the weight of the pocket of the purchaser. The coin-seller showed me two coins of the Sassanian period and he demanded a thousand Afghanis i.e. Rs. 80/- for two. I was examining the coins to find out whether they were genuine or not, when a Police officer came and at once the coin-dealer disappeared. I thought that the man had gone inside to bring some more coins ; but even after waiting for ten minutes, I could not find him back. The Police officer asked me what I was waiting for. I told him that the coin-dealer had just gone to bring me some Sassanian coins which I intended to purchase. He laughed and said that the coin-dealer had disappeared and would not come back. These

were faked coins and at the sight of the Police officer, the coins dealer had disappeared. So I narrowly eseaped being cheated by purchasing false coins at the bazar of Ghazni.

We turned back and on the way, Mr. Gulji took about a dozen snaps of the fort of Ghazni, of the towers and of the minarets of Sultan Mahmud from different angles. It was getting dark and the cattle dealers were returning to their homes after the market was over. We took a large number of snaps again of the bridge of Ghazni, of the markets and also of the guest house where



Bazar at Ghazni with Music

we had just come to take a little rest and to have a cup of tea. The Governor of Ghazni had already arranged for our evening tea at the Guest House though he was not himself p r e s e n t there. We were very much touched with the courtesy

of the Governor, because he had anticipated that we

would be exhausted at the end of the day's journey. After being refreshed with a cold wash, followed by a cup of hot tea, we started back towards Kabul.

It was about 7 o'clock in the evening when we were half way between Ghazni and Kabul. The driver was driving at full speed when suddenly he stopped and cried out *Yah Allah!* (Oh ! by God). The jerk of the car made us conscious of some ugly situation and we just peeped outside and found before us a big chasm or opening across the road ; on two sides of the road, there were deep diggings by the Irrigation Department, though there was no water. Seven or eight Afghans were cutting the road with shovels in their hands and with some instruments like spears. They stood in grim silence like black shadows. Mr. Moktedari was afraid that these men were possibly high-way robbers who wanted to rob us on the way. Such type of robbery was not unusual at night here. We had actually no weapons with us. Mr. Gulji told that we ought to have started earlier before it was dark on the way.

The driver just ran up to those men on the left to enquire what they meant by cutting the road and blocking the way. These people seemed afraid and they actually admitted that they were cutting the road as the Government was proposing to cover

up the irrigation canal which would mean that their land would remain virtually dried up during the sowing season. They were digging the road in advance so that there would be no difficulty for water in the sowing season.

Whatever the reason for this cutting was, the situation was that we would have to go back a distance of ten miles and then cover it up by another road which would mean an extra thirty miles before we could reach the main road connecting Kabul. Mr. Moktedari was rather unwilling to believe the version given by these people. He said that we were in danger, as it might be that these people would swoop down upon us and make us objects of their prey. The driver of the car who was an Afghan proper asked them to help us to carry our car over the ditch which they had dug. I suggested that the car could pass very easily if they would put across two planks of trees which were lying on the other side of the ditch. These planks might be used as a bridge. My suggestion was accepted and these Afghans practically lifted our car to the other side of the ditch according to this plan. This proved the honesty of the contention of these road-cutters that they were actually cutting the road in the interest of cultivation and

preventing the drying up of their land. So it was evident that they were not robbers. Any way, we were saved of a mishap because if we had not seen the ditch and if the ditch was a bit deeper and wider one, we would have come to grief that night.

In this way, we lost half an hour and we reached the outskirts of Kabul by 10 o'clock in the night. We passed through Bala Hissar, the fort city of Kabul across the royal palace and drove along the river, Daria-i-Kabul. The night view of Kabul reminded me of a few stories about the Afghans. One of them was the pathetic story of Lilaram. I have read the story of Lilaram and I hope I shall be able to incorporate it in my diary at the end so that our Indian readers will feel delight to read the connection between India and Afghanistan the medium of a romance of Humayun.

13th June :

Early in the morning, I got a phone from the Iranian Embassy that they had already arranged a lunch in my honour and that they wanted me to give my impressions on Iran where I was a guest of the University since the 3rd March, 1959. I was rather embarrassed at the thought of a lecture on Iran organised by the Iranian

Embassy where I would not be able to give all that I had seen, heard and felt in Iran. Anyway, I could not refuse the invitation to deliver a lecture which would be an informal one. At once, I started recording my impressions from my note book and arranged my subject rather chronologically, specially the points concerning the University of Teheran.

At 12 'o clock noon exactly, I reached the gate of the Iranian Embassy and found the Cultural Attache of Iran waiting for me. I was at once presented to the Iranian Ambassador who very cordially shook hands with me and offered me a peg of white wine though it was Russian. I begged to be excused and preferred to have a glass of cold drink specially *Pepsi Cola* of Iran. He told me with the usual courteous Iranian way a few sentences of welcome and eulogy. He disclosed that he had heard so much about me from Mr. Moktedari and had read so much about me in the Iranian newspapers that I appeared to him not a stranger. Our acquaintance, though unseen, was very real from my points of view.

Within fifteen minutes, the guests began to pour in and I was introduced to the Consuls of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Italy and of United Arab Republic. It was stange that no

Afghan, or Russian, or Indian representative was present there. Certainly it was not accidental, because India and Afghanistan were not very friendly to Iran, nor was Russia. So, they were left out of the list of the invited guests ; I could expect that at least the Indian Ambassador would be invited because the party was in honour of an Indian.

The most hearty welcome that was offered to me was that by the Consul of Iraq. He said that he was at Delhi for four years and liked the Indians so much that he had purposely come here to meet the Indian guest though he had some precious pre-engagements at his office. He could not forego the pleasure of meeting me and inviting me to Iraq to deliver a few lectures in the University of Baghdad I told him that I had already visited Iraq in 1944 and that I was charmed more with the people of Basra than with those of Baghdad. He informed me that Baghdad had a big Indian colony with a large number of Indian merchants. The Indians were very popular in Baghdad. Many Oil Establishments of Iraq are practically worked by the Indian personnel, and the Iraqis love the Indians because their approach is very informal and sincere. He then told me that there are some

Indian Engineers in Baghdad who are very popular. It took me about twenty minutes to leave him so that I could have some talks with other Ambassadors and Consuls present there. The Ambassador of Pakistan was on transfer and he was very busy with packing his goods. But because I was an Indian, he cut off many of his engagements and came to meet me. From his talk, I could understand that he had come not so much to hear my impressions on Iran as to hear my comments on Pakhtunistan. It had already been circulated in local papers and journals that my subjects of talk in Afghanistan would include a topic on Pakhtunistan.

The Indonesian Consul told me that he was a Muslim but had married a Hindu girl and she was following her own religion. She was from Bali islands and he told me many things about the Indian culture in Bali, and about the Hindu religion. The marriage between a Hindu and a Muslim in the Eastern Archipelago was not unusual. He gave me a description of some of the temples in Bali. Just at this time, his wife intervened and shook hands with me because she learnt that I was a Hindu interested in Islamic Culture. She said that she had visited all the Muslim countries in the Middle East and had seen the relics of the Indian culture there. She

said that she hoped to accompany her husband to India in the near future, where she would see for herself the home of Hindu culture.

Next came the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia. He would speak only Arabic and Persian and did not know English or French. He started talking with me in Persian and I replied in broken Arabic. So he was very much pleased to talk with me in Arabic. But I was rather out of practice in Arabic, as I had no opportunity to talk in Arabic in India. I tried to speak in Arabic as far as possible. He was a very tall fellow, not very robust and his dress was not suitable for a lunch, because he had not *Agala* (head band) on his head. Of course, he was not very particular about his dress. Possibly it was due to his excessive drinking, or due to the informal character of the meeting.

Next came the Italian Consul and I could understand from his aquiline nose and from the air of superiority that he was certainly not an Asiatic ; he must be one from Europe. He then introduced himself as an Italian. He belonged to the profession of merchants ; during the War he was drafted into the army and served in Egypt. There he picked up Arabic and soon entered into the foreign service of Italy in a Muslim

country of the Middle East. He could speak fairly well both English and Arabic. He asked me about my impressions on the Muslim countries. The Italian seemed to be very clever, because he would not complete the sentence himself and wanted me to complete it leaving very important points and ideas to be covered by me. I avoided talking to him on important political issues. He wanted to elicit my views on the relation between India and Pakistan. He also wanted my impression on the Kashmir question. Naturally, I was very cautious. Again, the Iranian Ambassador came to me and invited me to attend the 2500th anniversary of Iranian kingship at Persepolis in 1960

In course of the lunch, I was expected to give my impressions on Iran. But I found that most of the guests were busy with their own circles and exchanging their own ideas, giving information or getting information as they wished. I felt that these people, under the influence of liquor or otherwise, would not like to have anything from me about Iran. In the end, the First Secretary of the Iranian Embassy stood upon his legs and requested me to give my impressions on Iran.

I gave my impressions for about fifteen minutes and invited questions telling them frankly that I

would not like to discuss politics and if they liked, they could put any question to me on the education and culture of Iran and their connections with India. It seemed, none of them was interested in this dry subject of culture. Three or four questions were put to me by the Iranian Ambassador who was present and by none from outside. I was saved of an unpleasant situation.

I came back to the hotel at 3 o'clock and found Mr. Gulji anxiously waiting for me. He was ready with his camera and took about twelve exposures of mine. He was very sorry that I would be leaving the country within two days. I handed over to Mr. Gulji my comment on his paintings for the newspaper Forum of Canada for which, he said, I would be paid twenty five dollars. He paid me at once the amount which, he said, he would take on my behalf from the newspaper. I gave him a receipt for that amount which he needed for Forum.

Mr. Gulji told me a lot of things about Pakistan Embassy because he felt that his paintings had been utilised for political purposely by the Pakistan Ambassador. The exhibition of his paintings that was arranged by the American Embassy, was a diplomatic exhibition, less an appreciation of his paintings and more an advertisement for the

Pakistan-American entente. I did not like to discuss his personal affairs because it might create misunderstanding.

At 4 P.M, Prof. Hussain Shah came and I had my tea with him. We began to discuss our scheme about the *Legacy of Afghanistan*, because Mr. Kohzad had given him some instructions about the proposed book. Prof. Mahammad Ali also arrived at that time in my hôtel and we discussed the plan of our work. He presented to me some books which were very much appreciated by me.

After Prof. Mahammad Ali had left, Prof. Mir Hussain Shah and I went to the market and purchased four heavy gold buttons for 2500 Afghanis i.e. about Rs. 320/-. The gold cost me about Rs. 70/- per *tola*. Then we entered into the Kabul Bazar and had a talk with the Secretary of the Indian merchants there. He gave me a good reception and wanted to invite me to a tea party on behalf of the Indian merchants in Kabul. As I had no time, I obliged him by taking a cup of tea in his shop. My experience of the Indian merchants in foreign lands, is a wide one starting from Alexandria to Kabul. If the Indians are convinced that if the guest is not a spy, or if he is not diplomatically connected, the visitor will surely get a good reception from them.

We came out of the market after half an hour and took a stroll by the side of the Kabul river. I heard from Prof. Hussain Shah that in 1957, there was an attempted *coup* by a Minister of the Cabinet. It was planned that King Zahir Shah along with the whole Cabinet would be blown out at the door of the mosque on the day of the 'Id'. The plan was well-set. But the Russians, just a day before, sent a message to the King that his life was in danger ; a tape record of the entire conversation of the conspirators was submitted to His Majesty at the dead of night. No time was to be lost and immediately, all the conspirators were arrested in their own residences and the Minister concerned was consigned to an unknown place. Till now, people do not know where he has been despatched, or whether he is alive or not. His whole family has been deprived of all their property and some members of the family had also been spirited away. I felt that the punishment meted out to them was really of the Afghan type. For the fault of one of the members of the family, all other members were severely punished. Immediately, I remembered the story of Ghyasuddin Balban, the Turko-Afghan Sultan of India who punished Tughril Khan, the Governor of Bengal, for his rebellion by destroy-

ing all the buildings which were once occupied by the rebel Governor. Even the cats and dogs of Tughril Khan were killed, because if they were found on the street, the people would point out that these animals belonged to Tughril Khan. So, in order to efface the last trace of the rebel Governor, this drastic step was taken recourse to. King Zahir Shah was really an Afghan so far as this *coup* of 1957 was concerned. I do not know how far this story is true.

Incidentally, I had a discussion about the Constitution of Afghanistan with Prof. Hussain Shah. Prof. Hussain Shah belonged to the Department of History and he is very much conversant with the Constitution of Afghanistan. He told me that the first article of the Afghan Constitution is that the religion of Afghanistan is Islam and the King of Afghanistan must be a *Hanafi* Muslim. The people of other religions such as Jews and the Hindus are tolerated. Afghanistan is completely independent both in matters internal and external. The city of Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan; the King of Afghanistan at the time of accession must take an oath that he must govern the country according to the laws of the Quran; the King must be a constitutional ruler and all his expenses must

be included in the budget ; Afghan citizenship is determined both by birth or by naturalisation ; personal liberty is assured if one does not violate the law of the country ; slavery is forbidden ; the subject has right to observe his religion unmolested ; employment in Government service is a part of his civic right ; freedom of expression through newspapers and meetings are allowed provided they are not against the interests of the country ; forced labour or contribution of money are prohibited except in times of war ; primary education is compulsory , foreigners are not allowed to open and conduct schools in Afghanistan ; all public schools are financed and supervised by Government ; the *Zimmis*, or the protected non-Muslim subjects may have their own schools which might impart education to their own children, but there shall be no Muslim students in a school run by the non-Muslims ; the right of publishing newspapers belongs to Government ; the subjects of Afghan Government may be permitted to publish books and newspapers which do not contain anything against Islam, or against the Afghan Government ; people have always the right to appeal to the Prime Minister and to His Majesty if they are agrieved with the decision of the judiciary.

There is a National Assembly which is called *Shura milli*. It is composed of Afghans elected from Kabul and other provinces. They meet at the capital, i.e. Kabul on fixed days. Every bill is to be approved by His Majesty the King before it becomes a law. The National Assembly, at the opening of each Session, presents an address to His Majesty the King who makes a reply. There is freedom of speech in the Assembly, but it must not be against Islam. Budgets are placed before National Assembly which is prepared by the Finance Minister. No concession to private individuals, or public firms can be sanctioned except by the National Assembly. The Railways and all other means of communications are under the control of the State. The Ministers are subject to criticism and they have the right of reply in the Assembly.

There is also one Upper House called the House of Nobles. It is composed of experienced persons to be selected by His Majesty the King. They have the right to examine all the bills and confirm or reject them after they have been passed by the National Assembly. The House of Nobles has also the right to initiate measures. In case of difference of opinion, there is a joint sitting of the National Assembly

and of the House of Nobles. If no agreement is there, the bill will be referred to His Majesty.

In matter of justice, the law followed is the law of the Quran. There are *Qazis* in every district and in the capital. The Supreme Court, or Dewan-i-Ali is established every time when it is necessary to try Government Ministers. There is no permanent *Hukumat Ala* i.e. the Governor who is advised by a Committee. They are appointed by the Centre. In towns, there are municipalities and there are municipal councils.

The army is composed of the Afghans only. Foreigners are not employed in military service except as doctors and instructors.

Prof. Mir Hussain Shah had practically the whole of the constitution of Afghanistan in his memory and I was very much delighted to hear them and I recorded them in my diary as I heard them, may be I had missed some points ; but I certainly remember much more than I have forgotten.

By that time, we had crossed about a mile along the northern bank of Daria-i-Kābul and reached the the great fort which was destroyed by the British Army during the last war. Then we reached the gate of the Training College and began to discuss about the position of education in Afghanistan.

Education in Afghanistan was theological till 1919 when after independence, the first High School was started under the name of Habibya High School with a primary class attached to it. There was also a teachers' training school and military school. Within ten years, ex-King Amanullah took up the question of education in right earnest. Since then, education began to be a concern of the State, which was formerly a close preserve of the Ulama. Education in Afghanistan is divided into primary, secondary, advanced and vocational. There are basic schools called primary schools, or village schools. The languages taught there are Pashtu and Persian. Arabic is compulsory for theological students. Arithmetic, geography and history also form subjects of the curricula. Agricultural instruction is also not excluded. There are girls' schools where only needle-work, child-care, cooking and home economics are taught.

The secondary education was modelled upon French and German systems. One foreign language is compulsory in all the schools—French, German, or English. The duration is six years for primary, three years for high schools and three years in college. The students who pass the secondary school examinations are called graduates. Then

they are allowed to join the University of Kabul, and recently University of Qandahar has also been established. The subjects taught in secondary include theology, Poshtu, Persian, mathematics, history, drawing, chemistry, physics, one foreign language, economics, ethics, logic, geography and physical education. Of course, every student is not required to take all these subjects. There are divisions into science, arts, medical and engineering. Prof. Hussain Shah claimed that their aim was to equip the students with all round knowledge on all these subjects. He confessed that their ambition is rather high. He said that after all, an honest attempt was being made to equip an Afghan child with all that is necessary for modern age.

He told me that as I had seen the working of the University, I could form my opinion about it. But I pleaded that my stay there was so short that inspite of working even for 18 hours a day, I could not know as much as I liked to know about Afghanistan.

Then I asked him about female education in the country where everything is under the veil. He gave me to understand that there are girls' primary schools where students are admitted at the age of 7 and their curriculum of study is

different from that for boys. Higher education for women is limited to Faculty of arts for 7 years and science and literature for 4 years each. There is also a branch of education called vocational which directs teachers' training schools. Education is controlled and organised by the Ministry of Education which has been established only in the year 1955. There is another type of schools called the theological schools where Islamic law and religion are studied. The position of a theologian is still very high in Afghanistan unlike that in Iran, or in Egypt.

Foreigners are invited to come and join the Education Department of Afghanistan and students from Afghanistan are sent abroad. But compared to the neighbouring countries progress in education in Afghanistan is still negligible. Yet, they have very high ambition. Prof. Mir Hussain Shah admitted that India had been very kind to send teachers to Afghanistan and they appreciated the cultural sympathy of India for Afghanistan. He said that my visit to Afghanistan had given a great inspiration to the elite of Kabul and they appreciated very much my lecture in the University and my discussion with them. The Vice Chancellor was very much enthusiastic about my book and he

was looking forward to the day when I would publish my book on Afghanistan.

It was 9 P. M. when I reached my hotel back. I found in the lounge Mr. Donlin waiting for me with a journalist, Herr. Gunthur Gudian. Herr. Gudian at once introduced himself as a touring journalist in the Middle East and he said that he had heard a good deal about me from the Ministry of Information and that he wanted to meet me. He had been waiting for about half an hour. We had discussion about what I had seen in Afghanistan and he gave me his address and said that he would like very much my book, to be printed in Germany and asked me many questions about India and Pakistan. I could understand that he was not only a journalist but was a diplomat too. He knows thirteen languages and can talk freely in almost all the European languages and also in Persian. He said that he was coming to India soon and would learn Hindi so that he might get in touch with the common people of India. It was 10 o'clock at night and I had to go back to my dinner for which Mr. Gulji had made special arrangements.

14th June :

At 7 o'clock in the morning, Mr. Donlin and Mr. Gulji came to my room and invited me to

have breakfast with them. I found that both of them were heavy at the thought of my leaving Kabul next day. Mr. Donlin invited me to his home town at California next year when I was expected to visit the State as a Professor in the University of Syracuse in New York. Mr. Gulji was very much anxious to get an appreciation of his portraits and paintings from me. Though I was no connoisseur of art, yet from my general discussion with him on different aspects of art and architecture, he felt that my appreciation would be very much valued in U. S. A. He had already had my comments on his paintings which were meant for a famous art journal of Canada, I mean the Forum. He wanted me to send for his mother and sister some pieces of Indian silk which it was not possible for him to procure in Pakistan. I told him that it was not also possible for me to send these from India to Pakistan unless through Customs and these would certainly be prevented by Customs both in India and Pakistan. So he instructed me to send some pieces of best Benaras silk through UNESCO. I could not disoblige Mr. Gulji who was so kind to me all these days and really he was one of my best attractions in Afghanistan though he belonged

to a different State, not always friendly to India. Mr. Gulji gave me two dozens of snaps and a dozen of the photographs which he had taken at the tomb of Babur.

At 10 o'clock, Prof. Mir Hussain Shah came to my room and presented me a beautiful Afghan dress which I prized very much, not less than what was given to me by the Governor of Ispahan when I delivered my speech on Sufism in Iran. He also presented me a number of books on Bamian and also some old articles from the journal, *Ariana* which reminded me of the promise made by Dr. Kohzad, a former Director of the Kabul Museum and the great architect of modern Afghanistan.

We then went to the Vice Chancellor to bid him farewell. The Vice Chancellor was astonished that I was leaving Kabul so soon. He invited me to come back again next year and if possible, to stay in Kabul for a year. In the meantime, I received a phone from the Registrar of the University telling me that a tea party had been arranged in my honour on that day. I was to deliver my promised speech on the *Shape of Islam in India*. I agreed to his request because these Afghans were so kind to me and whatever little was possible for them to do for me, they did for me.

At 12 o'clock noon, I came to our Embassy and bade farewell to the Ambassador, Mr. Haskar, Mr. Ohri, our First Secretary and to all the members of the Embassy, specially Mr. Chhadani and Mr. Bodhraj who were so helpful to me during my short stay in Afghanistan. Our Ambassador, Mr. Haskar was very sorry that I did not tell him before that I was leaving Kabul so soon. He had already arranged for me a trip to Bamian and he had collected a large number of pictures for me from Bamian giving an idea of the reminiscence of Hindu and Buddhist cultures on the top of the Hindukush Mountain. Mr. Ohri invited me to a dinner in my honour at 9 P. M. in his house. He told me that he would invite all the leading Indians in Kabul who were connected with Point Four Program and UNESCO.

I came back to the Ariana Air Office at 12-30 P. M. and gave my *Afghanis* to the money-changers of the Ariana Air Office to be changed into rupees. Just opposite to the Ariana Exchange Office, there is the Indian money-changer the *Multani* with whom I had got introduced some days back. I told him that I had exchanged my money from the Ariana office. He wanted to know how many rupees I got for how many Afghanis. He was astonished

to find that I was cheated to the extent of Rs. 95/- in a transaction of Rs. 500/. So he asked me to return the money to them and come to him with the Afghanis. I told him that it would be very awkward if I returned the money after the transaction had been complete. He insisted that Indians should not be allowed to be cheated like fools. He felt that it would be dishonour to India, his never-seen motherland. He insisted that I should return the money and get back my dues. Quite unwillingly, I went to the Ariana office and told the money-changer to exchange my rupees into Afghanis. This clever money-changer could understand that I had something in my mind. Without protest, like a tame man, he returned my money. I went back to the *Multani* friend and thus got my money in rupees.

At 1-30 P. M. I had my lunch and Mr. Donlin was present with a German friend. I was introduced to that German gentleman who could speak little English also. He was introduced to me as a snake expert coming from the University of Berlin as a research scholar in pharmacology. He was making experiment in cobra poison. He told me that he was going to India next morning to study snakes in the Indian Zoological Gardens in Delhi and

Calcutta. He disclosed that he was in Kabul for the last five months and he had captured about twenty five varieties of cobra. He was living in a garden eight miles from Kabul. He had with him three white cobras from Russia and also some from Iran. He was-visiting different lands in order to make experiment with the poison of cobra in the cold, temperate and hot climate. I was astonished to find a man coming all the way from Germany through Russia and Iran to make experiment with snakes in India. So I was very happy to have him next morning as a fellow passenger to India. At 2-30 P. M. I came back to my room and found that Mr. Gulji was waiting for me with two packets of dry fruits. I was overwhelmed by his kindness.

At 3-30 P. M. Prof. Mir Hussain Shah came to take me to the tea party which was arranged by the University of Kabul in my honour. Some Indian Embassy top men were also invited there and I was to deliver a speech, though a short one, on the *Shape of Islam in India*. They were astonished at my orthodox interpretations of Islam from the Indian stand-point. I gave a copy of my lecture to Prof. Hussain Shah for publication in the University Journal which, he said, would be an honour to them.

When I was coming out from the tea party, just at the door, I was met by about a dozen of important personalities of Kabul who wanted to hear from me the Indian point of view on Pakhtunistan. I told them that, for reasons political, I could not speak publicly on such a subject. But I could give my observations on this subject in my personal capacity in the form of questions and answers. I do not know if they were satisfied with my answers to their questions on Pakhtunistan. They were told by the Vice Chancellor with whom I had already a long discussion on the Pakhtuni problem that my views on Pakhtunistan was very logical. They requested me to publish my impressions on Pakhtunistan problem in Indian newspapers and journals. I frankly said that I could do so only in my personal capacity.

Coming out of the tea party, Mr. Ohri invited me to have a stroll in his car to Kotla which is ten miles away from Kabul. There, on the foot of a hill, a temple of the Sun had been discovered during an excavation. There was also a tradition that the Hindus had their Sun temple on this Kotla from very olden times inspite of spread of Buddhism. The temple had been discovered in 1930. There was an image of a Hindu god *Ganesha* in the Kabul

Museum discovered in Kabul. The image of the Sun was shown by the Afghan delegation who attended the 150th anniversary of Sir William Jones, the founder of Asiatic Society at Calcutta.

We took the road straight from Kabul to the north. With us, were Prof. Mir Hussain Shah and Mr. Mahammad Ali. Fortunately for me, Prof. Mahammad Ali was present in 1929 in Kabul when the rebellion of Bachha-i-Shaku took place. He told us very interesting stories about the propaganda made by the British Missionaries under the garb of Afghan Mullas. The rule of King Amanulla was mis-represented specially when the Afghan girls, who had been sent to Europe to be trained as nurses, arrived at the Kabul airport. The Mullas raised a hue and cry that Islam was in danger during the rule of King Amanulla as these girls could not return without being violated by the Europeans and this was fanned by the British agents who were there and Bachha-i-Shaku took the lead with the help of the British Missionaries. Within two days of the arrival of the Afghan girls, Bachha-i-Shaku arrived at the northern gate of Kabul with only ten thousand tribal men. Bachha-i-Shaku was at first wounded by the royal guards, but he was brought to the British Mission compound and

there he was nursed and was given shelter. By that time, the propaganda of the British had created a sensation all over Afghanistan and unfortunately King Amanulla had also made enemies in his own circle by his too fast and too many reforms. So, Amanulla was advised by his friends to take shelter in Qandahar and to raise a force to combat Bachha-i-Shaku. But he could not raise the sufficient number of followers to fight for him. In the end, he had to flee to Italy with his wife and a small number of retinue. Of course, he had with him large amount of jewels, diamonds, gold, and cash. The next part of the story revealed how General Nadir Khan, who was the ambassador of Afghanistan in Paris, came to Kabul and put up a fight against Bachha-i-Shaku. He captured the throne of Afghanistan and became King of Kabul. Bachha-i-Shaku was killed. Professor Mahammad Ali showed me the places of activity of Bachha-i-Shaku in Kabul. Nadir Shah was, of course, killed after four years and his burial ground may be seen today on the bank of river Kabul. Prof. Mahammad Ali's description was as thrilling as I had read in Mustaba Ali's enchanting book *Pathe Prabashe* depicting the rebellion of Bachha.

We came back at 6 o'clock and I found that

Prof. Mir Hussain Shah had already arranged a car for me to take to his house on the other side of the city Kabul. He wanted me to visit his house and to have at least one cup of tea with him. I could not disoblige him though my time was so short, because I was to attend the dinner at the house of the First Secretary of the Indian Embassy at 9 o'clock.

I reached Prof. Mir Hussain Shah's house at 7-15 P.M. It was a rented house with a large compound. The architecture was a mixture of medieval Afghan and Western style. The atmosphere around was that of a fort. The walls are very high ; the inner court-yard was separated from the main compound by a narrow lane.

The reception room is a very wide one, which is separated by a second wall. It was in fact, a wall within a wall. The door of the room is about ten feet away from the main entrance of the reception room. Inside the reception room there was a big carpet on which there was a small table one foot high. On the table, a piece of a very nicely decorated cloth was spread. This cloth depicts a wild camel being pursued by hunters which gives an atmosphere of Arab Bedwin life. On the walls on three sides,

similar carpets with various decorations depicting the Afghan life and the Arab Bedwin life were hung up. I asked Prof. Hussain Shah where he had got them from. He said that these were from Beirut. The price is moderate. They were not heavy *Kalin* but very light carpets.

On the table, he had arranged very decent dishes of Afghan preparation. The quantity supplied was sufficient for at least six persons of my type. I enquired of Prof. Hussain Shah if there were other guests to come. He replied that the dishes were meant for me alone. Jokingly I said to him that I would take these dishes to India not to be consumed by me alone, but by my entire family. I then invited him to share the dishes with me to which he at once agreed. The Afghans feel insulted if they are not requested by their guests to partake of the dishes with their host. In the meantime, I could feel that in the ante-room to the left, there were tinklings of bangles and I felt that the female members of Mr. Hussain Shah were just peeping towards me.

Just then entered an old Afghan servant, lame of one leg, with a tray in his hand in which there was an excellent pen-stand made of the finest transparent Qandahar stone. It had been specially ordered

for me. Jokingly, I started conversation with the servant. The servant or *Khadem* disclosed that he was an old slave of Mir Hussain Shah's family and he came from Qandahar with him. He was a slave of this family from the time of his grand-father and would not like to leave his master till his death. I talked with this slave for about 10 minutes and I asked him how he liked Kabul. He said that Kabul was a bad city, full of blinding dust in summer and there were no good fruits in Kabul. Qandahar, his city, was the city of fruits. His Qandahar was the real city of the Afghans. He regretted that the people of Kabul were not genuine Afghans, while those from Qandahar were genuine. The people of Kabul wear European dress, shave beards and talk much. I asked him if he would go to India with me. He smiled and said that if his master would agree, he would not even hesitate to go to hell with him, what to speak of India. I appreciated his sentiments for his master.

In the meantime, we had finished our tea. Within 15 minutes, I started back and found at the gate Mr. Alvi, a Professor of the Department of History of the Kabul University, waiting for us with an Afghan cap in hand. He humbly said that the cap was sewn by his wife to be presented to me. I asked him why he

chose to wait outside the room. He politely told that when guests were inside, it would not be proper to disturb them. He knew that I would come to Prof. Hussain Shah's house ; but he was late, and it was his fault and it was for this reason that he did not want to enter into the room in the midst of our talk. 'I felt that Afghans were not what they were usually depicted to be by the Iranians and Europeans.

By 8 P. M., we came back to the Kabul Hotel. Prof. Mir Hussain Shah told me that he would see me in my residence before 6 O' clock next morning and that the Vice Chancellor would send his car to take me to the air-port. I was astonished at the courtesy of the Afghans towards a foreigner whom they had met for the 'first time and whom they might never meet in future.

At about 8-15 P. M., I found in the lounge of my hotel, a representative from the University with a bundle in his hand. On opening it, I found that it was an Afghan waist-coat made specially for me as a *memento* and as an object of commemoration. I should not refuse this small piece of present from the University, so did the representative plead. The Vice Chancellor regretted that I had to go back to my country practically without finishing my course

of lecture. He hoped that I should come back again and see more of Afghanistan.

By 8-45 P.M., I heard a horn of a car with which I was acquainted before, because it was from the Indian Embassy in Kabul. It was sent to take me to the house of Mr. Ohri where a dinner party had been arranged in my honour.

By 9 P.M., I reached the house of our First Secretary. I found that five more Indians were waiting there for me. There were also two ladies—one Mrs. Haskar and the other Mrs. Chiranjib of Kashmir. Another couple—a Madrased engineer attached to the UNESCO and his wife, was also there.

Mrs. Ohri was very busy arranging the tables for us. It was a very neat dinner. But I had taken so much food throughout the day that I had no space in my stomach to take any more. But I had to oblige them by taking some sand-witches and a glass of cold drink. In the meantime, the Madrased lady just looked at my forehead and looked. Her husband asked her what it was that she was looking so intently at my forehead. I did not know what the lady told to her husband about me. Mrs. Ohri told that the lady was a good reader of lines on the forehead and she was also a palmist. I was not at

all interested in the reading of my future. So many people had already predicted before about my future and only a few of them had come out correct.

Mr. Haskar, our Ambassador, came and sat by me and asked me about my impression of the Afghans and their attitude towards India. He knew, however popular a diplomat he might be, he was not trusted either at high level or at the society. People are cautious about the diplomats. As I was a Professor, it might have been that the Afghans had expressed their views on India frankly to me. I told him that at the present moment the Afghans look upon India as their Elder Brother and our Prime Minister is respected very much by them. The barometer of love and admiration for Indians is to be determined by the mercury of hatred which the Afghans bear against Pakistan. The sore point of relation between Afghanistan and Pakistan centres round two problems. He wanted me that it would be better if I told my mind to our Prime Minister on my return to India. He insisted on my telling the Prime Minister that a Chair in Poshtu should be created in the Delhi University or in the Calcutta University and the radio programme in India must include a talk in Poshtu everyday. The Afghans are very much radio-minded and the

radio is the village and city phone ; it is the medium of contact between an Afghan home and the world. Further, he suggested that an archaeological study group should be sent to Afghanistan to study the remains of the Indian architectural treasures in Afghanistan. A propaganda hand-book should be written detailing the connections between India and Afghanistan through ages. The Afghans to-day are Aryan-minded. More Indian scholars should come to Afghanistan to join their university and schools. Exchange of teachers between India and Afghanistan is a necessary condition before a cultural bridge is constructed between the two countries.

He regretted that I had cut down my stay in Afghanistan to so short a time. I gave him my impression on Ghazni, the Khyber Pass and of the Pakhtun problem. I also described to him the Indian treasures that I had seen in Kabul Museum. I suggested that India and Afghanistan should exchange some art treasures in original or in replicas or in copies of models and there should be an *Indian room* in Kabul Museum as there should be an *Ariana room* in the Indian Museum both in Delhi and in Calcutta.

In the meantime, all guests came and others sat round me and I gave them a talk for about half an

hour and answered all their questions, as far as I could, about Iran, Egypt, Palestine, Israel, Syria and other Muslim countries which I visited before. It was now 11-45 P.M. and it was time for me to bid them good-night because I was to get up at 4 0' clock next morning to get my aeroplane.

It took me about an hour more to get my luggage ready. Just as I was going to my bed, Gulji, Donlin and an American journalist knocked at my door and they wanted to talk to me throughout the night as if they would not like to miss even a minute of my company. But Mr. Donlin after half an hour felt drowsy and left. Others also soon followed him. I went to sleep at about 2 0' clock telling the waiter to wake me up at 4-30 A.M. at the latest.

15th June

The bearer woke me up exactly at 4-30 A.M. I took my bath, shave, morning tea and breakfast. By 5-50 A.M. Mr. Gulji and Mr. Donlin who were to accompany me to the airport, also came. In the meantime, a car from the Embassy arrived and another from the University. We started for the airport exactly at 6 0' clock. Just then arrived my

young German friend Irlinger to bid me farewell and to accompany me to the Air Port.

The sky was still then not clear. We started under cloud along a zigzag way. Prof Hussain Shah and Mr. Chaddani who had received me at the station when I arrived in Afghanistan, were again at the Air Port to bid me farewell when I was leaving Kabul.

The German snake expert had also come by that time. The air-ship which was scheduled to start at 6-30 A.M. was delayed by an hour and a half. We were ten passengers in the Ariana Air-ship. The prospect of passing over the Sulaiman Range of Mountains and also the idea of passing over Pakistan border had a thrill for me. We were soon over the Sulaiman Range. It was dark black roll of mountains and our air-ship was almost touching the peak of the mountain. I was afraid that our ship might crash against the mountain peak, but it did not. By 20' clock we reached the Amritsar Airport. Two hours more and I was at New Delhi.

The End

APPENDIX

Contributions of the Afghan Hegemony to the Medieval Indian History and Culture.

Afghan hegemony in Medieval India is a drama in five acts. The drama opens with the conquest of Muhammad Ghuri, and ends with the rule of Ibrahim Lodi. The prologue of the drama is played by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni and the epilogue ends with the collapse of the Sur Dynasty in the field of Panipat in 1556, with a little break of fifteen years when two descendants of Timur, I mean Babur and Humayun, ruled India from 1526 to 1540. Of course, those two Chagatais played their part in the drama of Indian History from Kabul to Qandahar, the two strategic spots of Afghanistan for a considerable period.

It is true that Sultan Mahmud, during his rule in Afghanistan, undertook seventeen campaigns against India and fought a number of battles with all consequences which are generally cited in most of the history books and chronicles of the time and of later centuries. But inspite of all these, the relations of India with Afghanistan of that time did not consist only of wars and counter-offensives and destructions. There was another side of relations between the two countries, more humanistic and more durable.

The conquest of Sultan Mahmud opened a new chapter in the relations of the two countries and gave birth to a new fusion of Indo-Afghan culture and civilisation which is generally called the Muslim culture in India. Mahmud of Ghazni was a great conqueror. He was a firm believer in his faith, but his real aims and objects were the establishment of a big *empire* including, besides his kingdom of contemporary Afghanistan India, Persia, Transoxiana and even the neighbouring countries. His intention to create a confederation according to his own conception and a fusion of all those "countries around the throne of Ghazni.

It was Sultan Mahmud who used bilingual coin in *Nagri* character with Arabic *Kalima*. This bilingual coin in sacred Arabic and idolatrous. Sanskrit is of supreme significance in creating precedent for future Muslim rulers in India. If the Arabs had conquered any land, they at once started Arabicising the conquered people and country by abolishing the local language and replacing it by Arabic language and script. Linguistic imperialism was a feature of the Arab rule. But Sultan Mahmud honoured the language of the heathens by giving it a place side by side with sacred Arabic.

The greatest gift of Sultan Mahmud to India was Al-Beruni about whom I shall have to speak in details later.

It was Sihabuddin Muhammad Ghuri, a child of the Afghans from Ghur, who supplanted the Ghazni rule and occupied Lanore as a part of the Ghazni legacy, Historically speaking, Ghuri is credited with

permanent conquest of India and he ruled his Indian positions through his own chosen men ; they were slaves no doubt. The concept and term *slave* should not be understood in the modern sense of the term. In the Afghan sense, slavery is status and not a profession. A prince of yesterday, after he is defeated in a battle, is a slave to-day ; if he has capacity, he is a son-in-law tomorrow and a successor to his master day after. In fact, Muhammad Ghuri accepted in principle and practice, the fundamental theory of dignity of man. Hence, he appointed Qutbuddin Aybak as his representative at Delhi.

It was Qutbuddin Aybak who made Delhi the permanent seat of Government in India. This is an important fact that instead of building a new city he chose to continue the old, without breaking the tradition. Arabs and Mongols loved to destroy the old, the Afghans often allowed the old to continue and add new to the old. Qutbuddin brought a tradition of generosity in his administration and he was called the *Lakh Bakhsh*. He introduced the game of Polo in India. He was succeeded by Iltutmish who was a slave of Ghuri too. Iltutmish's contribution to Indian history is much more than he is credited with. It was he who saved India by refusing asylum to Jalaluddin Khwarizmshah who was flying from the wrath of Chengiz. Foresighted and far-sighted, Iltutmish had a sense of the real to make an assessment of his strength. It was Iltutmish's tact which persuaded Chengiz to retrace his steps from the border of India. India was relieved and saved. Had he come to India, it would have

been a rehearsal of the tragedy of Baghdad as was in the time of Halaku Khan, a generation after.

By getting investiture from the Caliph of Baghdad, Iltutmish became a "recognized ruler of Islam." Indian Muslim state was recognized as a part of the world of Islam. He became Shamsud din, the Sun of religion. (*Shams* = sun, *Din* = Religion).

One may agree or may not agree with the nomination of a lady to the throne of Delhi by Iltutmish, when he chose his daughter Razia to succeed him on grounds of efficiency, strength of character, qualities of head and heart, but there is no denying the fact that he had the strength of mind, boldness of conception and fixity of decision. Selection of a lady to the throne was a great departure from old traditions of Islam.

To fight the Mongol menace, he created a large number of forts in the frontier of north-west India and settled lands with the tribes in the frontier and gave them autonomy in agriculture, tax and day-to-day life. These tribes were the sentinels of the frontier ; may we not be justified in regarding that they are the forerunners of modern Pakhtunistans ? He did not attempt the impossible, he did not try to extend the territory, but he maintained what was already there. His wisdom and moderation in politics must be commended.

Politically speaking, Balban was the doyen of the Afghan rule in India. His contributions are too many ; he had served six rulers, he created five of them. Besides maintaining the frontiers of India safe, he created some new political traditions. It was he who

brought dignity to the institution of royalty in Muslim India. He made royalty an art and an institution. His political philosophy has been well preserved in his advice to his son Muhamma, as has been recorded by Ziyauddin Barani in his *Tarikhi Firuz Shahi*. He followed the tradition of ideal of kingship—King is the shadow of God—*Zil-i-Ilahi*—king is the product of eight keepers of the world i.e. God. *Raja Asta loka Pala-Sambhuta*

Khalji Afghans were from a village called Khalaj in Qandahar province. Alauddin Khalji is the first Muslim who carried the Muslim flag to southern India across the Vindhya range of mountains ; he built the first all-India empire after Asoka and forged a real unity to India. He six times drove the Mongols out from the frontiers of India and did not scruple to kill twenty thousand Mongols in one day when they proved menace to his empire. To him the State was the *first love*. "To religion"; he said, "not that I love you less, but I love my state more." His conversation with Mulla Mughisuddin is very significant when he said, "I shall do what is good for the State." This idea of separation of State from religion as early as in the 13th century points out a departure in the practical state craft of the Islamic World.

His boldest experiment was his price control system. To get supply for his army, he fixed the price of every article ; he controlled the export and import system, a policy which is being followed by most advanced states of the world, seven hundred years after, in the 20th century since the last world war.

The Tughlaqs, a mixed race, who succeeded the Khaljis, created many interesting precedents in Indian politics. By offering allegiance to the Sultan of Egypt, Muhammad Tughlaq brought Indian Islam to in a line with world Islam. Nominating Firuz Tughlaq, son of a Hindu lady, Nila Devi of Dipalpur in the Punjab, he recognized merit as criterion for kingship. It further proved that birth from a non-muslim mother was no bar to succession to a Muslim throne. His great contribution was that he brought logic into politics, but unfortunately, he was far in advance of his time ; he was the first Indian to experiment on a system of a base metal currency.

Firuz Tughlaq was a great builder ; he built twenty cities, dug four canals, constructed roads from Bengal to the Punjab and planted 1200 gardens. He translated the famous book of Hindu medicine into Persian.

Unfortunately, during the reign of his third successor Muhammad Shah Tughlaq, Timur devastated the Delhi empire, a blow from which the Afghans never recovered either in their homeland or in their land of adoption. Then came an interregnum. Three Syeds ruled Delhi as representatives of Chagatais, who were followed by Lodi Afghans.

In politics Bahlol Lodi gave demonstration of tribal spirit of the Afghans—spirit of equality and tribalism. Bahlol Lodi was a merchant in his early life, though born of a fighting clan. Of course, every Afghan is a soldier by instinct. When occasion demands, he can take to sword. In order to re-establish the Afghan supremacy in India, he invited his tribal brethren from

Afghanistan and placed them in position of honour and dignity. It was in his time that the tribes of Formuly, Farankhudi, Mohmnadi, Lohani and Nohani came and settled in Hindusthan. He was so conscious of the sense of equality that he would never sit on the throne before them. In fact, he constructed a throne which could accommodate forty Afghan nobles at the same time. He never addressed his Afghan nobles by name, but would add the title *Masnade-Ala*. He often put off his turban before his compatriots. If a noble would feel his honour touched, or his dignity wounded, Bahlul would go to his house, take off his sword and beg his pardon and would not come out unless he had made amends with him.

Sekandar Lodi, his son, was a harder stuff than his father. Sekandar had to fight the Sharqis of Jaunpur. His whole life was continuous struggle for the safety of the Delhi empire. He did not attempt to extend his empire; out of a practical sense he ruled his kingdom as he had inherited.

It was Sikandar who introduced the system of account, writing in two languages, local and Persian, and a regularised law. He was first to build a fleet for pilgrims to Mecca which was later revived by Akbar.

Unfortunately, the Lodi rule came to an end before Babur, the sixth descendant of Timur, who had shattered the Tughlaq empire a century and a quarter before. That was due to tribal dissensions as well as a lack of capacity of the ruler. Ibrahim Lodi failed to get co-operation of his Afghan tribes due to his harsh

behaviour 'which wounded the prestige of the Afghans. Not that all the Afghans liked Babur, the foreigner but they disliked Ibrahim Lodi through he was an Indian. Babur won the battle of Panipat, but that did not destroy the Afghans' independence.

The epilogue of the drama is no less interesting. It was the revival of the Afghan rule under Sher Shah Suri—a true and real Afghan. Sher Shah was the last flicker on the lamp of Afghan hegemony. He was the last flash in the dying amber of the Afghans in India. Candle burns the brightest before it dies out. All that was great in Afghan was symbolized in Sher Shah. Gallant, astute, clever, and capable, Sher Shah turned a new leaf in political history of India. His was a new philosophy in the Muslim Indian politics.

He organised Afghan tribes together. No distinction was made between Batani, Sarwani and Lohani. He made friends with the Hindus too, whom he treated as Indians against the Chagatais under Humayun, whom he looked upon as foreigners. After he had driven out Humayun from India, he treated Hindu and Muslim peasants on equal terms. Hindus were freely recruited into the Muslim army. *Sarais* (inns) were made for the Hindus as well as the Muslims according to their religious sentiments. He believed in the theory that subjects are subjects whatever may be their religion. No distinction was tolerated in matter of justice. Long roads were constructed, wide canals were dug, attractive palaces were built. Though a devout Moslem he did not allow the *Mullas* to have the power of dictation in matters of state. Like

Alauddin, he controlled the army and organised a large standing army, made postal services and communication efficient. In fact, he was the forerunner of Akbar, the greatest national ruler of India after Asoka. Akbar, the Chagatai, was but a larger edition of Sher Shah the Afghan. Had Sher Shah been spared a few years more, Mughals might not have played a part in Indian history. Unfortunately within ten years after the death of Sher Shah, the Afghan rule fell under Humayun and Akbar ; but that too was from Kabul. Humayun's great general Bairam who conquered Panipat was Badakhshani Afghan.

Cultural contribution of the Afghans to Medieval India deserves more and better consideration than it has received so far. The greatness of the Mughals has dramatically blinded the historians who are generally fascinated by the length of the rule of the dynasty, succession of five great rulers and by the art and architecture of the great Mughals. The historians generally lose sight of the fact that it was a child of Afghanistan, Sultan Mahmud, who broke the backbone of resistance of the Hindus and it was he who opened the line of communication between India and the Muslim world. It was the Afghan colony in Lahore which kept the line of communication open for centuries between India and the Muslim world.

India owes to the great savant Al-Biruni, the court astrologer, philosopher, astronomer and mathematician, the living encyclopedia of the eleventh century A. D., for his discovering the lost sciences and forgotten philosophy of India. Al-Biruni was possibly

the most learned scholar of the world of his time ; so vast was his knowledge, so varied was his interest, so comparative was his approach that one wonders to think what "that one small human head could carry".

To the Afghans, Islam is grateful that they gave a fresh lease of life after the collapse of the Abassids, at the hands of the Saljuk and after the destruction of Baghdad at the hands of Halaku the Mongol. To the Afghans, goes the credit of establishing Islam in India on a permanent basis. India was a vast country separated by unaccessible deserts impenetrable forest, and uncrossable rivers. Hindus had long traditions and age-old institutions ; the conquered people were in majority, conquering Afghans were in minority. The task of conquest was a very very stiff one. Yet the Afghans in spite of tribal instincts proved that they were equal to the task. The Afghans at the initial stage, had to fight at two points, Hindus at home and invading Mongols and Turks outside. Balban, Alauddin and Muhammad Tughlaq were sometimes too cruel in the dealing with their enemy at home and abroad ; they might be justified in consideration of circumstances with which they were faced. They had no alternative but to be cruel ; and that was the spirit of the age too. In spite of their hard task of defence, they had to develop institution of government. They gave to Muslim India monarchy which was in consonance with the tradition of the conquered people. But it should be remembered that the Afghans were not semitic, though they had accepted the religion of

a Semitic Prophet of Arabia. The Afghans were Aryan by blood, Semitic by religion and Indian by domicile. The Afghans in India had shown wonderful spirit of adjustment when they had established institutions of Semitic Islam in Aryan India themselves serving as hyphen between Arabia and India.

Persian language which the Afghan rulers introduced into India was an Afghan product. The architect of *Dari* (valley) Persian was Firdawsi—a Khorassani. Khorasan was a part of Afghanistan at that time. Jalaluddin Rumi whose mysticism had so much inflamed the mystics throughout the world was a man from Balkh which is a part of Afghanistan. The four hundred poets who adorned the court of Ghazni was a sight for the gods to see. Of them, Baihaqi, Ansari, Utbi, Farukhi and many others are Al-Biruni immortal. It was just in the nature of things that Afghan rulers patronized Persian language in court, because it was their product.

The Afghans did not attempt, like the Arabs, to make wholesale conversion of the conquered people because the holy Quran permitted the existence of the conquered people on payment of Jizya. They did not impose on Hindu the language of the Quran which the Arabs tried to do. In fact, the Afghans made a compromise in matter of language. Urdu was product of Afghan compromise—its alphabet was Arabic, words Persian, Turkish and Indian, and grammar is purely Indian. To the Afghan patronage we owe provincial languages of Bengali, Marhatti and partly Hindi.

Indians as a class were not interested in History ; as such, Afghan kings attached to their court historians *Waqia-Nawis* (news-writers) who wrote history. Historiography as an art and a necessity, was the Afghan gift to India.

To the Afghans Indians owe some of the largest and finest roads, cities, gardens and canals of India.

The history of the Afghans has been blackened first by the Mughals who supplanted them, then by the British who blackened both the Turko-Afghans and the Mughals. Now there is neither the Turko-Afghans, nor Mughal rule India. So time has come to make an unbiased assesment of the Turko-Afghans who have been more blackened than facts justify.

*A lecture delivered by Dr. M. L. Roy Choudhury in the University of Kabul on June 8, 1959.

Some important publications of

Dr. 'M. L. ROY CHOUDHURY

1. State and Religion in Mughal India
2. Din-i-llahi (Religion of Akbar)
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